



messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 25 – Number 22-23

April 2008

Special Features This Issue
“Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival”
“Utokok Odyssey” – “Gimp Cruising a Team Effort”
“The Towelsail Yawls of Roaringwater Bay”





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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



Early in February a promotional flyer turned up in our mail inviting me to attend the Classic Yacht Symposium co-sponsored by the Herreshoff Marine Museum/America's Cup Hall of Fame in Bristol, Rhode Island, and the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers of Jersey City, New Jersey. It did not appear to be part of a mass mailing for our address was handwritten on it and an additional instruction for me was also handwritten alongside the address, "Att: W. Hick! Just be there!"

Well, I have no idea who mailed it, the postmark from North Reading, Massachusetts, gave no clue as we found no subscriber in that town. No matter, let's see what would be happening in Bristol on April 4-6, see if I should heed this instruction (order?).

I found that no less than 14 papers would be presented focused on yachting history, a full day Saturday 8-5 and on Sunday morning. The Friday program would be a guided tour of three boat restoration shops in nearby eastern Connecticut, all involved in working on the restoration of the New York 50, *Spartan*; MP&G(?), Stonington Boat Works and Taylor & Snediker. Sounded interesting, visiting restoration shops. More so than the prospects of a whole day listening to lectures, no matter how interesting.

And so I took a look at the numbers. Registration fee \$130. Boatyard visits an additional \$100. Yacht quality numbers, well beyond my small boat level. I considered requesting working press credentials that would get me free access but wondered if perhaps the organizers might not share my correspondent's urgency about my attendance. I do very little on historic yachting and all the ongoing restorations of such craft happening today. It's interesting stuff but not where I am at, as the saying goes.

I request working press credentials when I plan to attend events which I think will be of interest to readers and which events charge fees to attend which are beyond my walking around money. Boat shows such as the WoodenBoat Show, major gatherings such as Mystic Seaport's Annual Small Craft Workshop and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival are some examples. While I will be enjoying the same experiences as those who pay to attend, I actually will be working all day/weekend long (nice job) gathering news and taking photos for future publication. And after I go home I have to put all the gathered mate-

rial together into a report for publication.

Symposiums are different sorts of affairs for they usually include sumptuous luncheons and evening banquets. I balk at free-loading meals, especially expensive ones, as in this case, luncheon on Friday at the Seaman's Inn in Mystic and cocktails and dinner Saturday evening at the Hall of Fame Museum. But meal times are great times for schmoozing with interesting folks and I gotta eat somewhere. At a couple of bygone symposiums I attended I was actually told that the press credentials did not include meals. OK by me but there was no arrangement made as the assembled multitude sat down to eat for me to order up and pay for my own meal, it was all predicated on one lump sum paid by the organizers.

Adding to what I view as the probable irrelevance to the sponsors of my presence and subsequent reports, the travel costs; drive to Mystic and back Friday (250 miles round trip), drive to Bristol and back Saturday (200 miles), skip the Saturday night banquet and Sunday morning lectures (overnight costs in these places are way beyond me, it's cheaper to "commute") I decided I could not honor my correspondent's directive.

So what will we all miss out on in addition to those restoration boatshop visits? Here's the rundown of papers:

- "Carlo Sciarelli and His Yacht Designs"
- "*S/V Sarah* – A Love Affair"
- "Research and Construction of a
Replica of Nat Herreshoff's 1874 *Riviera*"
- "*Annie*: History and rebirth of a
Sandbagger"
- "Restoration of the New York 50 *Spartan*"
- "Peter Freebody: Master Craftsman"
- "A Return to the Edwardian Era –
Completing *Cangarda* and Initiating *Coronet*
"In Search of *Sadie*"
- "*Spirit of New England* – 144' Racing
Schooner"
- "Influence of Working Craft on the Post
WWI Wooden Yachts of the Northwest"
- "1 Boats – the 18-Footers – Variation
Within the Rules"
- "*Corsair*: Alive for Another 80 Years"
- "Yacht Tender Construction Utilizing
the Herreshoff Method"
- "Painting Wooden Boats"

Certainly there is plenty here for the yachting historians amongst us but I really don't qualify. Sorry to disappoint whoever it is who felt I should "Just be there!"

On the Cover...

John and Lynn Sperry spent their 2007 summer holiday canoeing alone some 200 miles

down the Utukok River on the Alaskan north slope ending up at the Chukchi Sea on the northwest coast. Not your everyday holiday as you will find upon reading John's report in this issue.



By Matthew Goldman

From the Journals of Constant Waterman

Yesterday it reached 40 degrees, cold enough to discourage most boaters and rather rough outside the West Cove breakwater. But four o'clock found me messing with my outboard aboard *MoonWind*, changing the fuel filter, purging the line, replacing the thermostat, all the exciting things one does to ensure the motor starts up without difficulty. I haven't a great love for motors but I do know a few things. One of which is, always suspect the fuel. Just as you wouldn't drink from a grungy old mud puddle, don't expect your motor to imbibe old fuel. If you do drink from grungy old mud puddles, pay no attention to this.

Though I visit the pier a couple of times a week to check the lines and fenders on several sailboats, I hadn't gone aboard my own boat for a month. My Whitehall gives me reproachful looks whenever I come out the back door of the shop.

"This summer *MoonWind* resides on a mooring," I tell her, "and I'll row that lovely paint off your little round bottom."

The quietude on a mooring commends itself but a boat tends to pitch a lot. This makes staying aboard only half as delightful more than half of the time. Sleeping aboard in a slip has none of the challenge that comes, free of charge, with a mooring.

How simple to get underway from a mooring, just raise your mainsail and cast off your mooring pennant. I won't miss motoring in and out of finger piers. The alternative, sailing in and out of your slip without power, only requires knowing how to maneuver in a table-spoon's worth of water. Especially when the wind turns fluky, when single-handed, or when other craft block your way.

Some mariners, occasionally even sailors (those are the ones with the earrings, Dear), don't observe when the wind provides your sole propulsion and assume you can readily back down your boat at will.

Sailing backwards requires heading nearly into the wind. By yourself, backing your main and putting your helm hard over while tooting three times on your horn, taking Poseidon's name in vain and eating an over-sauced eggplant parmesan sandwich requires two mouths and at least two pair of hands, more if the eggplant suddenly panics and tries to abandon ship.

I've sailed into my slip a couple of times when the wind cooperated. A supple main sheet that runs freely proves most useful, also having the main halyard accessible from the cockpit. I usually drop my jib before attempting close maneuvers. Even under power, when the weather turns rough, I've no compunction about hailing someone and asking him or her to handle a line.

Parking your yacht on top of the pier, or in another boat's cockpit, is generally frowned upon. It's imperative to learn how to heave a line accurately at 10 or 15 yards. Conversely, prepare to hand off your rabbit and catch a flung line to secure a plunging boat. In crowded marinas, even clearing a slip while under power may require assistance.

While we were lazing in our dock one day with an un-nautical acquaintance a good-sized powerboat passed astern and headed for her slip. Not seeing a second person aboard, I jumped up to help. Then the skipper's wife came on deck. By the way she straddled the pulpit, snatched their spring line from the piling, and cursed the boat hook, I knew she knew her business. I climbed back over our taffrail.

My acquaintance asked me what I had meant to do. When I explained that I would have taken a line or fended off, he looked at me, rather puzzled.

"Why should you care?" he asked. "It isn't your boat."

"No, it isn't," I said. But I thought to myself, if ever you owned a boat and kept her here you'd find, on even the hottest day, an abundance of cold shoulders. I've discovered since that not many people ashore seem pleased to see him.

You'd better stow your egoism when you work on the waterfront. Wait till next time you try to berth single-handed and the wind is slamming your bow against a piling. What a relief to hear someone shout, "All secure forward, Skipper. Pass me your spring line."

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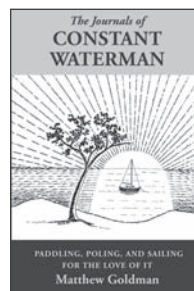
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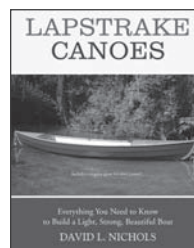
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John Stilgoe is identified as living on the coast of Massachusetts where he sails a ship's lifeboat from Newfoundland built in 1935. But this is not just John's tale about how he salvaged and restored and enjoys using his lifeboat. John Stilgoe is also Professor in the History of Landscape at Harvard and author of several books in his field, including one we reviewed a few years ago, *Alongshore* (see following review).

Lifeboat starts off with John's crawling out of his own lifeboat in his backyard shed where he was wrestling with keel bolts as a winter storm closes in on the Massachusetts coast. It concludes with he and his wife sailing it on Massachusetts Bay, occasioning much curiosity amongst other boaters out on the water. In between theses two slices of his own personal lifeboat experience is the meat of John's book, all about the lifeboat as a unique form of small craft over a long historical period.

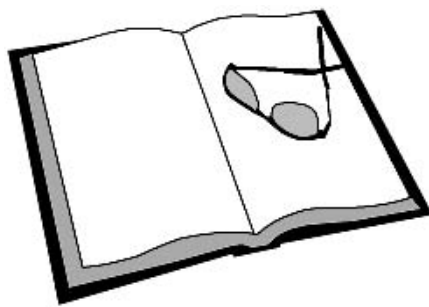
As a historian John introduces us to the cultural and social impacts on us that the lifeboat has had, and still has. He also provides the history of lifeboats in various major sea disasters and how they functioned. He describes for us the British Board of Trade lifeboat, the world standard for the type, and why it has always been so. We learn about various alternative lifeboat designs and why they failed.

The major characteristic of the lifeboat is that it is viewed as a harbinger of disaster and as such has long been a subject of studious disinterest to most who might have to resort to one, they'd rather not be reminded of why it is there. A second major aspect of the lifeboat is that it crossed over from the age of sail, when ships' crews knew how to handle small craft under oar and sail, into steam where increasingly crews were technicians and engineers, unschooled in handling this relic of yesteryear which required seamanship to function as intended.

The great bygone disasters under sail which often resulted in journeys of thousands of miles to safety in lifeboats were succeeded by those afflicting the early era of the giant ocean liners where a whole new set of conditions set in. The crews were untrained in seamanship, even in how to launch the lifeboats. The passengers were cosseted in giant floating hotels and, when suddenly confronted with the hotel going to the bottom of the sea and having to flee from the comfort and implied security of the great steamer into tiny wooden vessels open to the ocean with but oars and sails for propulsion, were crushed in spirit and morale.

The two World Wars, with all the sinkings from submarines and surface raiders, created a giant human experience of being abandoned by modern technology to archaic rescue devices. That the best rescue device was still the wooden lifeboat simply boggled people. But steel lifeboats were found to turn into frying pans when launched into flaming oil while wood would singe and char but get away. Motorized lifeboats often were unreliable and their engines and fuel tanks took up much precious space that survivors might need.

The Board of Trade lifeboat could take care of itself afloat, whether or not it carried its passengers to safety later over long desperate cruises or shorter periods prior to rescue vessels arriving depended upon the crews' skills. The lifeboat could be sailed and rowed to wherever the crew wished it to go,



Book Reviews

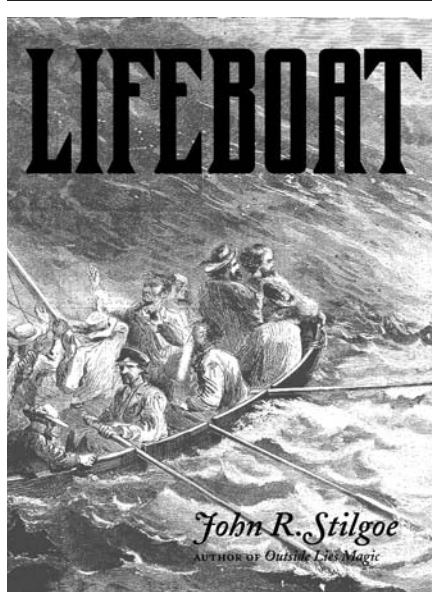
The advertisement that appeared on page 4 of the January issue for a new paperback edition of John Stilgoe's book, *Lifeboat*, prompted me to go back to our March 2004 issue in which I reviewed the original hard-cover edition and publish that review again in this issue. In that review I mentioned his earlier book of interest to small boaters, *Alongshore*, so I went further back to the October 15, 1994 issue in which reader Kent Mulliken reviewed that book and reprint that review here, also. If you have not read either of these books and appreciate writing by someone with a wonderful command of the English language, you will not be disappointed in purchasing (or borrowing from your library) either of these books.

Yes, I am an unabashed fan of John Stilgoe's work, having also read several of his books on landscape history, why the surroundings we live within came to be like they are through cultural and historical developments.—(Ed.)

Lifeboat

By John Stilgoe
University of Virginia Press
www.upress.virginia.edu
New in paperback – \$18.95

Reviewed by Bob Hicks
(In March 15, 2004 issue)



weathering storms at sea if need be. Rafts and some high flotation boxlike creations went where the wind and waves took them.

Once safely afloat, the lifeboat became a world of its own and primal animal urges overtook many aboard them causing much grief for all and often ending up on long, difficult cruises with cannibalism. Stilgoe goes into the collapse of human social customs when confronted with survival in some detail with many examples from long ago as well as recently. Women and children first, the romanticized attitude aspired to in a sinking, was seldom a reality, more often than not it was crew first.

This book is a wonderful read, not just for its subject but because the author is so much a master of the use of our language and grabs your attention right at the start and doesn't let go, something I guess he has perfected with his lectures at Harvard. Any of you who read *Alongshore* will know what I mean. And if you haven't read *Alongshore*, you should, you may recognize yourself on its pages.

Alongshore

By John R. Stilgoe
Yale University Press – 416 pp

Reviewed by Kent Mulliken
(In October 15, 1994 issue)

If a friend handed you a squarish package wrapped in plain brown paper and said, "Here's a book by a Harvard professor published by Yale University Press," you probably would not anticipate anything like John Stilgoe's *Alongshore*. Once you unwrapped it, however, and admired the handsome dust jacket photograph of a lapstrake dinghy on a mussel-strewn beach, or noted the chapter headings on salt marshes, skiffs, harbors, wharves, pirate treasure, and bikinis, you might begin to suspect that this is not the usual academic monograph, notwithstanding its frequent footnotes and ample bibliography.

Your suspicion would be confirmed scarcely four pages into the introduction when the author breaks off a learned discussion of painterly terminology to assert, "The whole concept of seascape reeks of lubberly bias." There probably hasn't been a Harvard professor since Samuel Eliot Morison who'd have put it thus. Sure enough, this is an unusual book, and one of unusual interest to anyone who enjoys messing about in boats.

In his spirited introduction, Stilgoe lets us know that this is "a personal book, based on local observation." Throughout the book he is right there, though he buys a bit of ironic distance by adopting the persona of "the barefoot historian" rather than using the first person singular. Stilgoe comes by his personal involvement honestly for he is a native and current resident of the shore of Massachusetts Bay between Gurnet Light and Minot Ledge, the immediate alongshore realm of which he writes. Make no mistake about it, he is a local, at home on the beach. Like Henry David Thoreau, whose Cape Cod is cited more than once, he distrusts enterprises that require new clothes. Indeed, his chapter on the bikini brings a formidable amount of historical and practical argument to bear on the question of whether clothes, bathing suits at least, are necessarily a good idea at all.

John Stilgoe has previously written a book about the representation of the Ameri-

can landscape and he is clearly interested in the lay of the land, in this case that ambiguous part of the land that falls between the continent proper and the main deep. A recurrent theme of the present book is perspective, how we view the familiar and unfamiliar scene within the range of the human eye, from the details near at hand to the distant shapes on the horizon. In the company of the barefoot historian we look at a great deal up close: mudflats, the underside of docks, abandoned watch towers, beached boats, and not least, the people on the shore. Gazing offshore we see the horizon and sometimes beyond it, thanks to the phenomenon of "looming," the seaman's term for the occasional magnification of distant objects viewed over water.

And that brings us to another preoccupation of the barefoot historian: His fascination, some might say obsession, with out-of-the-way words. He introduces us to "looming" in the first chapter and over the course of the book lingers lovingly over many other terms of the sea, shore, and inlet: "Calenture," "gunkhole," "gundalow," "guzzle," and "glim." It's hardly surprising to learn that another of his previous works is entitled *Shallow-Water Dictionary: A Grounding in Estuary English*. Some readers may not altogether share this passion for esoteric words, but it's at least an amiable weakness, and what sailor would deny the importance of correct nautical language?

A bare statement of chapter titles or subject headings would not begin to do justice to the rich feast of information in *Alongshore*, nor would it suggest the associative meandering of the text which might be likened to a walk along the shore with frequent stops to inspect a found object or simply to let the mind sail free over the vastness of the sea.

A good example of this seemingly unsystematic but topically appropriate structure is the chapter entitled "Guzzle." A "guzzle" eventually gets defined in mid-chapter as "a low spot, usually on a barrier beach over which the sea now and then flows into the salt marshes inland from the dunes." To get to that point, however, we traverse a vast expanse of territory, all of it composed of sand, the real subject of the chapter. Along the way we pick up some useful local knowledge: How to walk on sand, how to sit in it, how to keep it from sticking to your sunscreen and out of your bathing suit.

We also take off on a global expedition in pursuit of quicksand, ranging from the deserts of North Africa to the American West, with a side trip to 17th-century Britain to pick up yet another arcane term, "syrt" (look it up). We travel in time from classical antiquity to the present and before you know it we've taken aboard the 16th-century military art of fortification, Sir Walter Scott's *Bride of Lamer-moor*, the film *Lawrence of Arabia*, and a more recent cinematic effort entitled *Blood Beach*. The barefoot historian is an inveterate collector of surprising facts which pile up, well, like sand.

There is much here to stir the imagination of the small boat enthusiast. The chapter on "Skiffs" is, in fact, about a whole lot more, the distinction between "yachts" and "boats," yacht tenders, catboats, the challenge of representing the intricacies of hull shapes in marine painting, the evolution and feminist implications of the outboard motor, and, after all, a well-rockered flat bottom skiff.

The chapter on "Harbors" incorporates a warm tribute to the wholesome lapstrake

runabouts made by the Lyman Boat Works, a brief history of the rise of amateur boat building, and a eulogy for the once common marine railway. All of the above, and indeed the entire book, is copiously illustrated with prints, drawings, old photographs, and other visual material. Among the 240 illustrations there is a wealth of interesting stuff, much of it from the author's obviously extensive collection.

In a sense, the rest of the book is prelude to its penultimate chapter, "Risk." Here the barefoot historian gets down to issues that evidently matter deeply to him. The kernel from which the chapter grows is a particular beach, virtually inaccessible from dry land, sought out by an intrepid band of alongshore venturers who make their way through a tricky estuary in rowing boats, canoes, sea kayaks, and other small craft that can be hauled across expanses of low-tide shallows. These determined folk share a dislike of "crowded," "stylish" beaches, jammed with people and equipment, of four-wheel drive beaches, of noise and trouble and rudeness." Moreover, they have in common a state of physical fitness that enables them to make their escape from all of the above in their muscle-powered craft.

They and their secret beach appear in a virtually utopian light. The scene also occasions an impassioned sermon from the barefoot historian on the appalling flabbiness of most of the rest of the populace, a lament for the forgotten values of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and a fond recollection of the culture of wholesome outdoor exercise in the decade between 1958 and 1968. (Despite his insistence that "nothing idyllic or nostalgic shapes these words" one can't help wondering whether those years happen to coincide with the adolescence of the barefoot historian.)

In contrast to the golden days of venturesome outdoor life, the barefoot historian sees the present as a time that collectively and officially distrusts exertion and the very idea of taking chances. He has little use for a number of current federal regulations designed to eliminate risk from the alongshore environment. Take, for example, the folly of building a boardwalk for wheelchair access across a beach exposed to winter storms and high tides. Part of this critique of an overprotective regulatory climate is grounded in the commonsense of local knowledge which tells him the structure will be driftwood come spring. It is also linked, however, to an intense admiration for the physically fit locals who are prepared to accept risk in order to have access to the water alongshore. The barefoot historian associates this elite (his term) with the small boat revival of recent years and quotes from such canonical sources as *WoodenBoat* and *Messing About in Boats*.

As sailor and a lover of small boats I am sorely tempted to buy this idealized portrait of the tough and independent alongshore adventurer. But something gives me pause. There's more to it than the beautiful fit people in small boats and bikinis versus the loud fat folks on the crowded shore. For one thing, there are other types on the water. Not long ago I came across the complaint of a Maine lobsterman trying to cope with the dramatic increase in recreational boating that complicates his working day.

"Kayakers don't realize that radar doesn't pick them up in the fog. It's dangerous." To the barefoot historian the kayakers may be fit, competent individualists (though

they, too, seem to travel in crowds) who accept risk as part of the fun. But to the lobsterman they probably look like self-absorbed pleasure seekers, ignorant of the headaches they occasion for the working waterman. They may even appear suspiciously like lubbers, it's a matter of perspective.

If I may be permitted a brief sermon of my own, all of us who follow the water for our own delight should keep in mind that there are others afloat taking risks not for the sake of risk but to pay the mortgage. It's not difficult to identify these others, they're the ones who aren't wearing bikinis. I'm sure that the barefoot historian, no slouch at local knowledge, is well aware of this, but he gets so carried away by his vision of the fit and the fat that he oversimplifies the picture. All the same, the chapter on "Risk" will make you think about some of the intended and unintended consequences of environmental policy, federal regulations, and the way we live now.

As I remarked at the outset, if you enjoy messing about in boats or poking along the shore, you'll find this an unusually interesting book. There are shipwrecks, marsh channels, passages from little known books about the shore, pictures from early issues of *Rudder* magazine, and much more. If a friend hands you a squarish package in plain brown paper and says, "Here's a book by a Harvard professor published by Yale University Press," my advice is, "Open it!"



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I would greatly appreciate it if you could mention in our magazine the upcoming Lake Pepin Messabout on May 30-June 1 at Lake City, Minnesota. This free event is open to all boat builders, those who are thinking of being boat builders, and folks who just like wooden boats. Full details can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/23aeq2>.

Bill Paxton, Apple Valley, MN

WoodenBoat School

The 2008 WoodenBoat School catalog arrived at *MAIB* in late January, too late to announce it in the March issue. It comprises 54 lavishly illustrated pages detailing courses running June through September. The main qualification for prospective students is a desire to learn, but some courses do require certain levels of skills which are outlined in the course descriptions. August 3-9 is especially set aside as "Family Week," with boat building courses, sailing instruction, island exploration and seamanship, and family cruising programs offered.

Registration opened January 2 so some courses may already be full but a check at www.woodenboat.com, a call to (207) 359-4651, or fax to (207) 359-8920 should answer your inquiry.



Adventures & Experiences...

Likes Walt Donaldson's Contributions

I always like Walt Donaldson's contributions but his last submission, "Chasing Walter Anderson," was extra special. When I was a kid my family used to take a spring break trip together driving from central Illinois to Biloxi, Mississippi. That's where we came to know about the artist Walter Anderson, his association with Shearwater Pottery in Ocean Springs, and his connection with Horn Island. In college I loaned our book of his Horn Island logs to an artistic woman of my acquaintance, but she ceased to be an acquaintance and I also never got the book back.

Walt's article awoke long-dormant memories and at my suggestion my wife bought me his *Horn Island Logs* (now in second edition) for Christmas. They start a bit slow but before long they draw you in to his very intense relationship with nature and the island. They culminate with his riding out a hurricane. The accompanying drawings and watercolors are riveting. Anderson is a peculiar genius who deserves to be much better known.

Thanks, Walt D, for your free-spirited tales of long-distance, motor-less sailing and for getting me re-acquainted with one of this country's greatest artists.

John Sperry, Salt Lake City, UT

Atkin Appreciation

What a nice surprise to see four pages about Atkins boats in the January issue! I have always loved Pocahontas. I actually saw one sailing once when John was a judge at a classic boat show. I was told that she was owned by someone in Mystic, Connecticut.

And John's writing, thank you for including it and the bit of Dan's article. He is such a great writer. I remember that evening so well!

If all goes well I will be at the WoodenBoat Show at Mystic again this June. Being a bit "vintage" I just keep "knocking on wood." I have signed up early to get my same space, it was just perfect last year.

Pat Atkins, Atkins Boat Plans, Noroton, CT

Good News from "Great" Guana City

We feel a little guilty this winter here in the Caribbean as you struggle back home in New England with what sounds like an "old fashioned winter."

We've just gotten the good news that our little "Great" Guana City has some native families who are going to do everything possible to put together a fleet of four Optimus prams for a first ever sail training program here. At last we will not be alone. Raising the money will be quite a challenge but this is a determined group. They have admired "Mr. Mac" for years as I glide amongst the big boats in my 13½' Merry Mac.

Ned "Mac" & Terry McIntosh, Dover, NH

Information of Interest...

Beetle Cat Boat News

After three years of somewhat informal regattas to determine the "New England Champion" in Beetle Cats, the New England Beetle Cat Boat Association (NEBCBA) was formed in New Bedford, Massachusetts, in the spring of 1940 for the purpose of providing an annual junior championship and initiated several other championships for both juniors and adults. Today NEBCBA still sponsors championships under the umbrella of the "Leo J. Telesmanick Championship" in honor of Leo J. Telesmanick (1915-2001), who built the Beetle Cat for over 50 years.

Last year at the Leo Telesmanick Regatta, sponsored by the Bass River Yacht Club, there were 29 Beetle Cats on the line for a wonderful weekend of racing. NEBCBA continues its traditional commitment to

supporting racing. Local fleets have many active races throughout the season which are capped off at the "Leo" with skippers and crews of all ages participating, resulting in a weekend of racing, friendly competition, good food, and socializing. This year's Telesmanick will be held at the Weekapaug Yacht Club in Westerly, Rhode Island, on August 9-10. NEBCBA is also dedicated to the maintenance, restoration, cruising, and promotion of the Beetle Cat.

William L. "Bill" Womack and Charlie York have had a very successful year at Beetle Inc. They continue to build and launch new Beetles with 12 launched in 2007. Beetle Inc provides storage and maintenance service for about 120 Beetles and parts for all others who maintain their own boats. Bill Womack brings a commitment and enthusiasm to continue the traditions associated with Beetle Cats and to strengthen them. We wish him all the success in his new endeavors to continue the tradition of the Beetle Cats.

Charlie York, NEBCBA, Wareham, MA

Beetle Cat Handbook Available

I enjoyed seeing the information in the February issue about "Care of a Beetle Cat" taken from a NEBCBA publication back in 1981. Some readers might be interested to know that the same information has been expanded and updated in the 2006 *Handbook* published by the New England Beetle Cat Boat Association. Copies of the Handbook are available from the NEBCBA Secretary, Michelle Buoniconto, Beetle, Inc, 3 Thatcher Ln, Wareham, MA 02571, (508) 295-8585.

Roy L. Terwilliger, Harwich, MA

Moosehead Lake Advice

In reading the description of Moosehead Lake messing in the February issue, I noted that it may be misleading. Living 45 miles from the lake we use it more and more now that we have moved inland from ocean sailing. Giving up the 28' sloop we have downsized to 19' and 23' O'Days for use on the lake, boats brought in from Long Island Sound and Muscongus Bay on the Maine coast.

I've been boating on Moosehead long before we moved up here from Flatlandia, say, oh, '53 was the first time out on its expanse. I never, and will never, use a craft on Moosehead not capable of ocean use. As anyone familiar with its moods will state, its winds are highly unpredictable and dangerous. One of the most moody and windy of days I have ever seen (and I have lived on windward Oahu, and in the midwest in summer, and boated just after hurricanes on Cape Cod, and been on a USN DD between Bermuda and Virginia following a hurricane as well), one of the most intensely stormy days I have ever experienced was near Greenville on Moosehead last summer going up to pick up a boat (19' O'Day) we keep at Beaver Cove Marina on the east side. It was a day we were extremely grateful we were not out on the lake. Be alert, canoeists and other small boat enthusiasts have died on the lake, not merely in single numbers but as families. I kid you not.

So a word to the wise and anyone is welcome to get in touch and check out how to use the lake with any of us in the Northland. With care, with caution, and a paid up life insurance policy. Kid you not.

Dr Ed Cass, Wellington, ME, edeshea@tdstelme.net

Sailor Girl Class Scheduled

My 2008 Sailor Girl boat building class will take place this year May 15-18, 3½ days of concentrated effort during which each student will build a boat complete with sails and rigging to take home for \$950. Sailor Girl was recognized in 2007 by *WoodenBoat* as a winner in their design contest for the boat building workshops that they sponsor. You also ran a story about her in your May 15, 2007 issue. She is a great little rowboat as well as sailer.

Interested participants should contact me for further information or enrollment.

John Wilson, The Home Shop, 406 E Broadway, Charlotte, MI 48813, (517) 543-5325, www.shakerovalbox.com



New Mystic Seaport Endeavor

Our newest endeavor at Mystic Seaport, "The National Rowing Hall of Fame," is a joint effort with the National Rowing Association. Newly installed in the Blunt White Building, this exciting new collection has been created by 32 new Seaport volunteers under the direction of Hart Perry.

Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT

Good Source for Used Sails

Thank you for publishing my article, "Seven Summers' Work," on page 45 in the February issue. I want to add that I have found two sources for used sails for anyone building small boats on a budget; Atlantic Sail Traders of Sarasota, Florida (www.usedsails.com) and Bacon Sails in Maryland (www.baconsails.com). Look them up on Google for more information.

Ron Mulloy, Randolph, NJ

Where Credit is Due

Boyd Mefferd's article in the January issue on crediting marine craftsman compelled me to write this note. Regarding the February reprint of Ron Hoddinott's WCTS Squadron newsletter article, "Lake Harris Overnighter," it favorably mentioned the "fine workmanship" on a new Drascombe Coaster, *An-*

nie, but unfortunately omitted to identify by name the "Maine craftsman" builder of this beautiful vessel. I was able to watch *Annie* over several stages of her infancy because her builder, East West Custom Boats (www.eastwestboats.com) of Kittery Point, Maine, are the nice folks who also built our Drascombe gig, Otter.

Hoddinott's article was of particular interest to me as we switched from sailing a fine Sea Pearl 21 to the delightful Drascombe Otter this past year so as to obtain a bit more room for our two sea dogs, and the piece included comments on both designs of boats.

Steve Francis, Elk Rapids, MI

Projects...

Phunstuph Update

I enjoyed viewing my *Phunstuph* in the January *MAIB*. For more than two years I've modified, looked again and again at her shape and lines, and then again wondered whether she'd be good, great, or other. Finally into the water last October I found she was very good beyond my expectations.

A few months back I received a nice note from Dynamite Payson who, having reviewed a few photos I had sent, responded that he had "never seen anyone try that before!" and also that *Phunstuph* was a nice, neat job. Great comments to receive from a person who knew her as a rowboat/sailboat by Phil Bolger.

I need to repair a couple of broken roof ribs and a broken front hatch rib that happened when I towed her to Essex from Lynnfield one night and the hatch hooks vibrated loose causing the damage when the hatch then blew open on the highway. Mother Nature (see photo) may help or hinder my repair efforts but I think *Phunstuph* will be afloat by mid-April at Perkins Marina in Essex and will begin providing me with comfortable clam digging accommodations.

George Thompson, Essex, MA



Needs Help With Two Boats

I am hoping some readers might help me out with two boats (pictured) that I plan to rehab.

The fiberglass sailboat is a 14' C-Lark built by Clark boats in Auburn, Washington. It needs a rudder and a tiller, the originals disappeared while it was at a boatyard in Helena (Montana) for rigging repairs (which it also still needs). Where can I get plans for a rudder and tiller? I cannot find the builder on the internet.

What books are available from which I can learn how to do rigging work? And where can I obtain rigging materials reasonably?

I was told that the inboard was built in Everett, Washington, after WWII (1947) by an old Norwegian fisherman. It was poorly built using plain nails (not bronze screws or glue). The design was for a large engine to

drive a planing hull. Does anyone know this boat's history?

The motor in it now is a 10hp air-cooled V-2 which ran a generator in a Boeing B-17 used to start the big radial engines. I've never run it in the boat but did so on the bench. I welcome any ideas for the engine, clutch, shaft, prop, and rudder.

I don't think the boat itself is worth keeping. The engine should be put into a newer, well-made displacement hull. I've never built a boat and have few resources here in Helena. Woodworkers here are into furniture.

Does anyone know this boat's history?
Bill Trumbull, PO Box 162, Ft Harrison, MT 59636, (406) 443-6039



Another boat probably available cheap with two motors which are said to run.



This Magazine...

Can Feel Much Better Reading Monthly

For many years past I have worried about how you will physically achieve the goal that you set yourself to make two issues of your wonderful publication available to us each month. Not just the wear and tear on your body and mind (I suspect that we are very close in age) but the ability to constantly awaken each day knowing that you have to stick to the routine that you obviously must have set yourself to follow to be able to keep us entertained at the level you do whilst continuing to find the material with which to draw upon. I am not a lazy person by any measure, but I salute you, sir.

Now, I can feel much better while I read the single issue each month, not only that you must benefit physically and mentally from the new format, and hopefully to some degree financially, but that I will now have suf-

ficient closet storage space in my new apartment for preserving my favorite collection of water reading material.

Many, many thanks for your dedication and selfless effort on our behalf.

Bill Hamilton, Chambersburg, PA

Worth Every Red Cent

I have your second issue of 2008 in hand and wanted to write to express a vote of solid confidence in you and the magazine. I am not sure what magic you possess, but for some reason it seems that it's a personal matter, you, the magazine, and me and, out there, some other folks, and I'm sure the rest of your subscribers feel pretty much the same way!

I always did enjoy the two issues per month format, but your willingness to share the challenges facing you in your comments via the editorial column underscores the reasons why you went to a monthly format. Whatever is best for you and the magazine is fine with me. Your magazine is worth every red cent of the paltry sum we pay for its arrival in our mailboxes.

If I had to list the top four things I enjoy the most it would have to be your editorial column, the letters, Phil Bolger's column, and Robert L. Summers' "Shiver Me Timbers." Every column and article gets read, though, and frequently re-read. And I occasionally go back through my old issues to find gems I may not have appreciated at the time.

I began my third year at the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding in Port Hadlock, Washington a few weeks ago, this year in the Large Craft shop. We're building a catboat from plans supplied by Mystic Seaport (their *Breck Marshall* plans, as a matter of fact) and a 16' batten-seam mahogany runabout to the 1932 plans of Edwin Monk from his 1934 book, *Small Boat Building*.

Pete Leenhouts, Port Ludlow, WA

Retired Without Incident

Having retired after many years as a licensed mariner I have discovered the joys of messing about. Each month I read "Beyond the Horizon" and am thankful that I was able to retire without incident worthy of Hugh Ware's diligent reports.

Thank you for the effort put into each issue, I read each cover to cover and find it very relaxing to read a few articles before sleeping.

Joe Fitzgerald, Brooklyn, NY

Book Marker Navigation

When I received the January issue I couldn't believe how many interesting articles and pictures it offered to occupy this old guy's attention. I now must use a book marker to navigate my way through its pages. It's impossible to choose a favorite contributor but Hugh Ware is a shining star.

On the subject of ads, I usually start at the back with the ads that I find contribute greatly to my knowledge of boats and boating. I have ordered items from many of these fine sponsors with good results.

Let me share with readers two recent bumper stickers which seem to address some concerns of mine:

"Do it today! There'll be a law against it tomorrow!"

"A man's boat IS his yacht!"

Danny Saam, Indio, CA

Texas 200 is Coming

By Chuck Leinweber

Bob has kindly allowed me to say a few words about an upcoming event that I think many readers of *MAIB* will be interested in. I would like to take this opportunity to invite sailors, paddlers, rowers, and other small boat cruisers to join us for the first annual Texas 200. It will be an informal, 200-mile, five-day cruise through one of the wildest places left in the continental US. I am talking about the lagoons, bays, and estuaries between the mainland of South Texas and its barrier islands. It will take place June 9-13 of this year and will be followed on Saturday, June 14 by the traditional Duckworks messabout at Magnolia Beach on Matagorda Bay. For more information see: www.texas200.com.

Background

For years now I have wanted to sail with a group along the wild and scenic Texas coast. Back in 2002 Sandra and I sailed our *Caprice*, a homebuilt 25' cat ketch designed by Jim Michalak, up and down this area and have wanted to encourage other folks to do the same. In 2002 we sailed from Port Isabel to Corpus Christi with a couple of friends in their 14' gaff sloop. That trip was a kind of life changing experience.

Later, when I got involved with the Everglades Challenge, I thought there should be something like that on the Texas coast. I asked Steve Isaacs if he would do a Texas version but he declined. Then after meeting him in Florida I could see why, he had his hands full already.

So I talked to a bunch of my sailing buddies here in Texas and all were enthusiastic, but most I talked to thought something more like a Raid would be preferable to an all out every-man-for-himself race like the Everglades Challenge.

I thought about it long and hard. I wanted to sail with everyone else, I did not want to end up the organizer who is too busy with politics and logistics to get any enjoyment out of the cruise. At some point it hit me, we needed a non-profit organization that was owned by the folks who sailed the course so that the chores of organizing could be shared by all. Thus the Texas 200 started to grow.

The Course

Since it is about 200 miles from the southern tip of Texas to Magnolia Beach, the traditional site of the Duckworks annual Messabout, it seemed like a good (not to mention alliterative) course.

The first 120 miles is as wild as any place in the country. This is partly due to the famous 825,000-acre King Ranch to the west and Padre Island National Seashore to the east keeping development to a minimum. Our route takes us up a large body of water known as the Laguna Madre, the mother of all lagoons. After that we travel from one bay or estuary to another; Corpus Christi Bay, Aransas Bay, San Antonio Bay, Matagorda Bay, all behind the wonderful chain of barrier islands that protect the coast of Texas. The warm water is full of fish and dolphins

and the skies have so many birds that this is a destination for birdwatchers worldwide. The breezes blow from the south or southeast (remember, we are sailing north) and June is "too soon" for hurricanes.

But don't get the idea this is a Sunday picnic. There is the famous Texas heat, the ceaseless wind, the 200 miles we have to travel, you will know you have done something when you finish.

Is it an Adventure Race or a Raid?

It will be something of a combination of these two and an expedition. Some will be keeping score of times for each day's run. Others will be along for the ride. There will be preset stopping points with both beaches for camping and anchorages for deeper boats and all will be encouraged to stop with the group. We will begin at Port Mansfield on a Monday and pull up to Magnolia Beach near Port Lavaca on Friday evening just in time for the Messabout on Saturday. The stops will be approximately 40 miles apart. It is a long slog. It will be tough. We will ask each boat to have a buddy boat or two of about the same speed that they will keep in sight of.

Who can join?

I have thought about various "filters" or restrictions such as only allowing sailboats or only home built boats, but in the end I can't bring myself to eliminate anyone. This may change (more on that later) but for now all are invited. There will be no entry fee. I think mostly sailboats will come, I plan to bring my *Caprice*, but powerboats are welcome (I am told there will be a couple of Skiff America 20s), after all, we do not know when some type of rescue might be needed. We also encourage paddle boats; kayaks, canoes, etc. There is no reason a larger boat cannot carry gear for a smaller boat. I hope a PDRacer will show up.

So What is the "Non-profit Organization" Part?

I do not wish to be the big kahuna of this deal. I want to have fun like everyone else. I tried for years to get someone else to get the ball rolling but it was not happening. So here is the deal: I have created Texas200.com, a non-profit organization. From now until the end of the first cruise (the first week of June 2008) I will be the big kahuna. At the end of the cruise everyone who completes at least one complete leg of the course will assemble for a meeting. At that point those finishers will become members of the board of directors of Texas200.com. They will each serve a term of one year for each leg they completed. They will elect officers for the following year and perhaps pass some bylaws. During the next 12 months the board will discuss the format for the following year and vote on issues. Meetings will take place through the forum on the website. (If you want to join this forum now to discuss plans for this year, you will need to know that my middle name is Lee in order to sign up.

What's Left?

In the coming weeks and months the website will grow and improve. There are already maps, weather information, a forum, and a list of 32 boats as of today. I encourage everyone with a small boat who ever wanted to sail this course to visit frequently to see what is happening.

I hope to see you at Port Mansfield.

While drying out from the '06 frog drowner Kokopelli, I think it was Tom Gale who floated the idea of going to Port Townsend in '07. The reaction was generally favorable and come midwinter wheels began to turn, however slowly. Years ago I gave a slide show up there in return for space to show off my Wee Punkin and sell plans. We could foresee selling t-shirts, pottery, videos, and boat plans. But it seems that success has come to the Festival so some free tickets, a t-shirt, and on-site parking was the best we could do in return for a couple of video presentations.

I disremember (FOG) just how it came about but sometime in the fall of '06 I got an email from Doug Brookens up in Seattle in quest of a steamboat hull. Fortunately I have several happy customers up that way and I soon had him nailed down for a September '07 delivery. It only remained to build the hull, edit the video, and hold my body together. The first two were put off awaiting optimum conditions. The old bod was coddled with plenty of rest and high antioxidant beverage. Come the September departure date the newly-laid hull still needed work on a couple of pimples, the video had been mashed down to bearable length, and the girls had refurbished the Punkin Eater.

We pushed right along but did hit some scenic roads, no winery visits, however. We raised Doug's meeting place at the appointed time and he piloted us through a rather complicated maze of driveways. Doug is a novice steam boater but is into engines and had an impressive big trailer-mounted IC single that he fired up for us.

After surviving an uncomfortable glut of traffic we hove into the Ft Worden campground about supper time. Dwight Nicholson had offered his new building lot, complete with porta pottie, but I had signed up early on at Ft Worden so the ladies would have hot showers. The camp is hardly extraordinary but costs \$31 a night and showers extra! Several folks stayed at the fairgrounds which is adequate and cheaper. Although the area is quite urban, the coyotes were loud and clear and deer were all over town.

The girls, ever mindful of my reputation, had given the Punkin Eater a sharp paint job. We launched her at the park ramp a mile or so north of the Port Hudson show site. Hard on the wind I thought I could lay the entrance with one tack but ran the board into the bottom 50 yards off the beach and had to go for the paddle.

I had just gotten through the entrance and was getting the lay of the place when I noticed an El Toro coming up behind me. We beat up the narrow aisle of water tack for tack until he got a hair ahead and quit. I carried on to the end and so declared myself winner. We were tacking within inches of the people on the finger piers and yet hardly anyone took notice of the stirring drama. Apparently they were mostly lookers rather than sailors.

The nice harbor man gave me a tow around to my backwater berth. At the time I had signed up for a minimum in the water spot (8' = \$60), I had planned to sit in the boat selling plans and videos. Once on station I determined that my time might be better employed doing market research and networking. I'm on the job, remember.

As it turned out I ran into so many interesting people and boats and stuff that I never even made it down the north float. Like, I stopped to look at a bright finish A guideboat. Sure enough, Steve Kaulback was

Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival

By Jim Thayer

standing by. I met Steve back in his formative years when we were both working with John Freeman up in Burlington, Vermont. He laid up some hulls in my Express mold which is still floating around up there somewhere. Well, chewing over old times and business ate up about an hour and so it went. Another East Coast outfit was Chesapeake Lightcraft which had several kayaks on display.

Most on land boat displays were small one-man shops with very nice products and optimistic outlooks. In the water were people who just wanted to show off their boats as well as boats for sale and various commercial outfits and big boats for charter. A count of the program shows 109 boats on exhibit but only eight for sale, mostly larger ones. It may be worthwhile to buy water space just to sit on my boat and party or visit.

Sam Devlin is pretty much in a class by himself when it comes to wooden boat building. He had a large in-the-water display of his "stitch and glue" powerboats. It may be a left-handed compliment to say that his boats could pass for glass.

There was a surfeit of things to do besides look at boats. There was a full overlapping schedule of workshops, lectures, and musical entertainment. I marked up my program but actually connected with very few of my choices.

Marc Perrett, dean of faculty, (yep, I was faculty, with t-shirt to prove it) was escorting me to the place for my presentation when he inquired where my laptop was. It turned out that video presentations were predicated on the assumption that everyone has a laptop. He got on the phone but couldn't shake loose a laptop.

I'm not noted for my elocutionary skills and seldom declaim for more than two minutes and then only for my dedicated audience of one. A couple of weeks later I got a demonstration of how it's done when our editor held the audience spellbound as he recounted tales of the magazine business. Well, I have been sloshing around long enough in boats and in enough interesting places that I managed to meander through the hour without collecting any vegetables. Fortunately for the Sunday show Marc hauled in his home DVD player.

The Kokonauts were evidently busy as I seldom saw any of them. The Gales took an excursion on the schooner *Adventuress*. I never laid eyes on Dwight and Dewitt except at camp. Mike and Michelle hit the show on their way back from the north slope of Alaska where they summer. Steve Axon evidently saw everything as well as taking plenty of notes and pictures. You can catch his extensive story and nice color photos on the Duck-works site.

There was some splendid eating and drinking at the Nicholson lot, which became the de facto Kokonaut central. Axon even garnished a dessert with blackberries foraged from the vicinity. Fence rows lush with berries and waters swarming with seafood are just some of the reasons for hanging out in this corner of the country.

On the way down from Ft Worden I was delighted to find that the Punkin Eater was indeed a classic wooden boat. She was leak-

ing around the centerboard case. This would allow me to hold up my end in any barroom discussions of wooden boat problems. Whenever in the neighborhood I would stop in and sponge up the seepage. One time while thus engaged I looked up to find an attractive couple observing my activity. I nearly launched into my sales spiel but they didn't seem to be the standard gawkers.

They had to tell me. It was the Fletchers, Simon and Jane, who build those elegant little bright finish runabouts up near Port Angeles. Was I embarrassed! Heck, they didn't look any different than last time I was up there when they had a boat in the show. They and their two lovely daughters used to come to the Urbanna Meet back when they had a base on the Corrotomen.


Sunday afternoon I was messing around the truck preparatory to meeting Steve at the boat when around the cap came... Great Balls 'o Fire... Wolf. Wolf, aka Robert Tabb, was the commodore of the Three Little Pigs fleet that graced the cover some years back and a certified Kokonaut. If ever "better late than never" fit the bill, this was it. I got on the phone (yes, I'm a cellaphonic now) and told the gang to hold position on the beach until we could get there. With Wolf safely delivered into the arms of the Kokonauts, Steve and I had a nice brisk beat north to the ramp.

Wolf, ever the thoughtful fellow, had brought a supply of Oregon brew on ice so we were set for a good, but alas too short, gain. The Gales, Dwight, and Dewitt had headed back to Utah somewhat earlier. Wolf had to get back to Oregon and Steve was headed out to poke around the Olympics, so the party broke up.

Back in the spring of '07 I had assayed a trip to the Cortez meet and issued a call for hull deliveries down that way. Mark White in Alabama took the bait and, even after I canceled, insisted on sending the money anyway, saying he would collect it someday. Mark is the guy who authored the magnum opus on shop construction a while back.

Mark had said that he would stop at the show on his way back from Alaska where he maintains another base. Through the magic of cell phones we managed to connect for a short chat. He has a boy going to school in Durango and he came out for a visit Thanksgiving and they picked up his hull. He's a fiercer road warrior than I.

To sum up: the P.T. Wooden Boat Festival is a fun affair, the weather is fine (in the Olympic rain shadow), and there are berries for the picking. Best save some time for trickling around the Columbia wine country.



Columbia Trading Co.

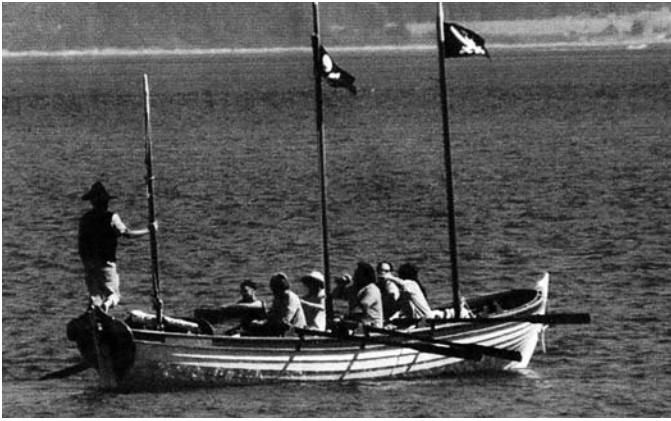
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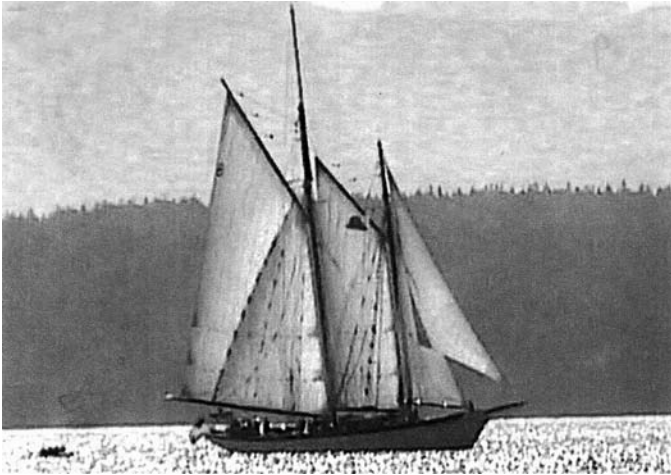


Townshend. Wooden Boat Foundation yawl boat.



Adventuress?

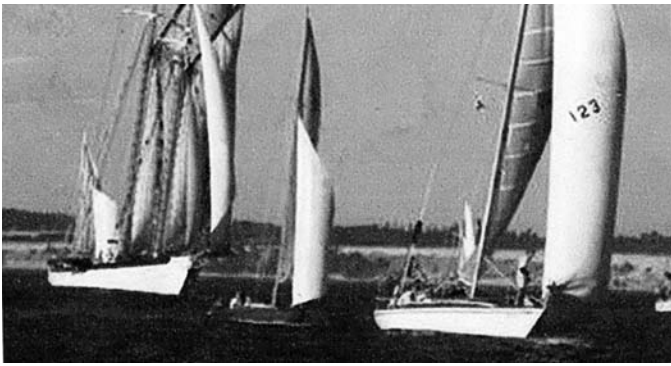
Willie and Ruby with fleet on the hard.



Big schooner.

Nice traditional steamer.





Dragon in middle.



Big cockpit (party boat) double ender.



Beetle Cat.



Lotsa sail!



Sailing canoe? Batwing ketch anyway.

Great Pelican.



“Square”spritsail.

Looks like a North Sea boat.





Overlooking the river on the first evening's stroll.

The periodic canoeing adventure articles which appear in *MAIB* inspired this account of a trip my wife Lynn and I took in the summer of 2003 on one of Alaska's north slope rivers, the Utukok. Every couple of years we sacrifice a few weeks of Utah summer and canoe up north in the remotest wilderness we can afford. Wilderness is the antidote for the poisons of civilization, a simple argument for its preservation. The cure is most effective if we go just the two of us and for the longest time practicable. Three river weeks this time.

The bush flights make it expensive, but then there's no room and board and so the outings end up costing a lot less than the typical vacation of similar length. But all that "board" has to be prepared ahead of time so there's work involved. The most fun about getting ready is deciding where to go. The first choice was whether to go to northern Canada or northern Alaska and whether the trip would be above or below treeline. Sometimes we're in the mood for the north woods, chains of lakes, pike and walleye, tea-colored waters, and Canadian Shield outcrops. Other times we want mountains and open space which takes us to the Brooks Range and its treeless north slope. That was the story with this trip.

But which north slope river? Like any river runner I take great pleasure in tracing blue lines on maps and dreaming. I'd had my eye on the Utukok River for several years and its turn had come. It has its source up in the De Long Mountains, the western edge of the Brooks Range. From there it flows through foothills and coastal plain north and west to the Kasegaluk Lagoon of the Chukchi Sea. Not great fishing but apparently good hiking and wildlife in the foothills, and from what I could tell it was traveled by just a couple of groups per year, some years just a single group or maybe none.

Our plan was to start as far up in the mountains as a bush plane could land, float 200 miles to the mouth, and then make our

Utukok Odyssey

By John Sperry

way 30 miles down the lagoon to the Inuit village of Point Lay. Point Lay is serviced by commercial air, so ending here eliminated the expense of another bush flight. But from the beginning I was nervous about the Kasegaluk Lagoon. For all that's written about the thrills and chills of whitewater, there is nothing as terrifying and dangerous as being caught out on "flatwater" when a storm blows up.

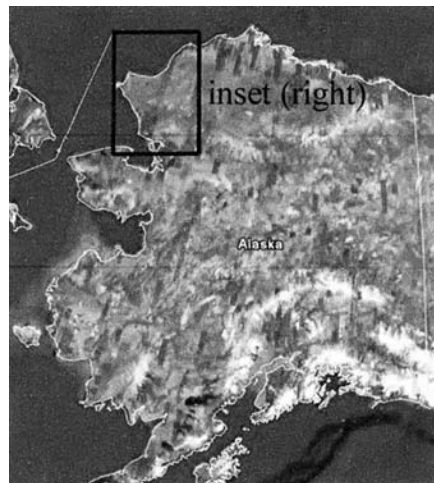
We use that most versatile of boats, the canoe. The problem with a canoe is getting it to the river. In Canada they can tie them on the struts of the bush plane, but in Alaska you can't do this and still carry passengers. We solved the problem a couple of years ago by buying a 17' "Pakboat" collapsible canoe. These have a tough PVC skin that is stretched over an aluminum frame. Air-filled sponsons along the sides stiffen the boat and provide

flotation. Ours carries over 900 pounds and weighs less than 60 pounds. It rolls up into a duffel that can be checked on airlines. It's easier to assemble than a Folbot and goes together in less than 45 minutes. A folding kayak (Klepper or Folbot) would not have been nearly as well-suited for the fast currents and large load.

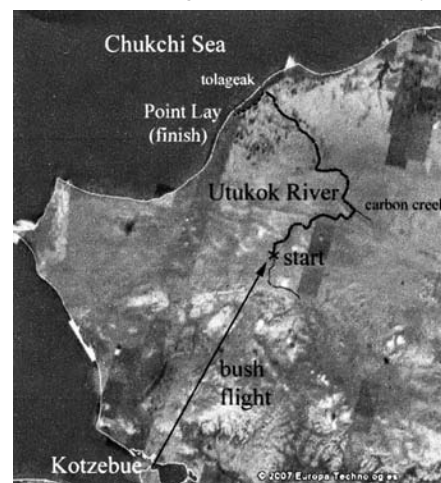
The Pakboat handles pretty much like a hard-shell canoe but rolls along the surface of the water in rapids or in a blow rather than slicing across the waves. It's a smoother ride that can be drier but we also use a spray cover for rough water. With this canoe-in-a-bag we step into a taxi from our front door in Salt Lake City with all of our gear and step out of the bush plane on the bank of a northern river within a day or two of relatively hassle-free travel.

On this trip we have an astonishing 350 pounds of gear (boat, food, and all) awaiting the mid-morning taxi. This is 100 pounds more than our previous trip of similar length. Guess we're getting soft in our middle age!

Inset shows the Utukok region of Alaska.



Kotzebue, bush flight, and river to Point Lay.



What are the “essentials?” Folding chairs and three weeks of margarita fixin’s for the all-important happy hour at the gravel bar.

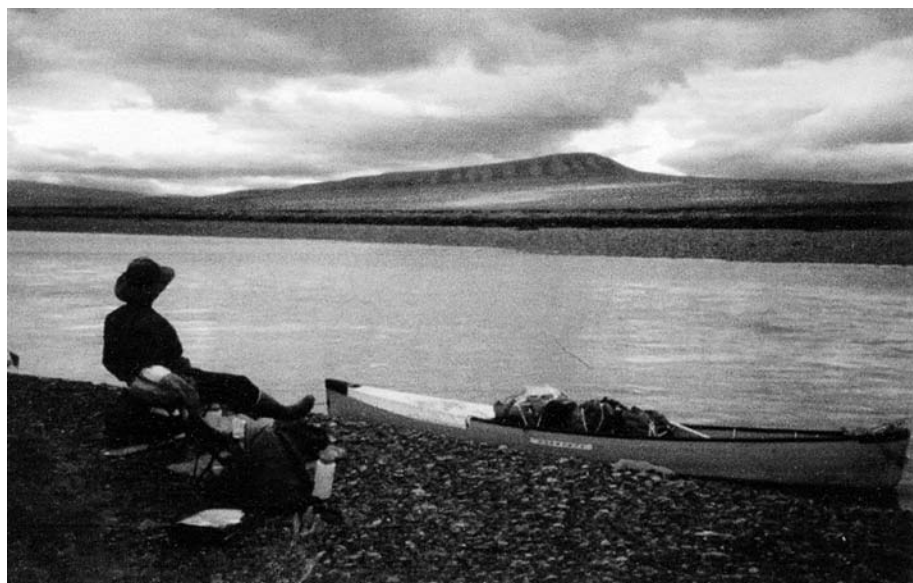
The next afternoon we are in a Piper Cub wheel plane en route from Kotzebue, Alaska, to the Utukok headwaters. There are no convenient lakes for a float plane in the Utukok headwaters so we’re looking to land on a gravel bar. These bush flights are a real highlight. Besides the usually interesting pilot there is the thrill of flying over the wilderness and finally getting to see the river we’ve only known in theory from the map. As we fly towards a pass in the craggy Brooks Range we study the patchwork of taiga and tundra, rivers and lakes below. Off to the sides, level with the wings, are ridges and foothills. I follow our progress on the map and pester the pilot with questions. Once over Nachralik Pass we are on the north slope and have left the spruce forests behind. Just mountains and tundra.

Soon we behold our river curving out of the mountains. It looks clear and inviting. As we look for a gravel bar to land on we spot several herds of caribou, one in the act of crossing the river. We’re here in the third week of June at the end of the post-calving aggregation of the herd. We can see the little ones straggling along. We also startle a grizzly bear from cooling his butt on a snowbank. There’s plenty of snow around, winter is never far away up here. As we suspected there’s no gravel bar good enough to land on until we reach the “driftwood airstrip” once used to supply an oil exploration camp. At present this is a barely discernible bare place between stunted willows.

Our pilot plops the Cub down between the willows like he was parking a bicycle. We tumble our gear out into the knee-high brush and write him the check, which is most of the cost of the whole trip. Odd to write a check out here while swatting mosquitoes on the north slope tundra. Then off goes the plane and here we are, right in the middle of everywhere, as a friend likes to say. It’s a strange sensation to be left alone, just us and our mountain of gear, the umbilical cord severed. We have 22 days now to make our way out and we have to do it all by ourselves with what we have. If we need something it has to be in that pile or we can’t get it.

Our only form of emergency contact is an aviation VHF radio that we can only use if a plane happens to be flying over that is listening to the emergency frequency. Of course, many days at a time go by without any plane being heard or seen and this device is a rabbit’s foot charm. Normally we carry an EPIRB which sends an anonymous, irrevocable SOS to a satellite in a dire emergency. But we discovered too late that ours had gone missing and all of the rental EPIRB’s were taken. We deliberately took no satellite phone, if Lewis and Clark could cross a continent without a phone in hand we ought to be able to go a couple hundred miles without one.

The flip side of being a little scared is an intoxicating feeling of freedom and space. Hundreds of miles of roadless and trailless wilderness in all directions and just the two of us with nearly a month to enjoy. Our highway is the river, which is flowing fast and strong, a typical Brooks Range stream with gravel bars and ragged willows. No rapids, just ripping current. The water is greenish with sediment from still melting snows. We are about 25 miles north of the divide and the terrain is rolling foothills marked by prominent east-west trending high ridges. The river



Lunch stop, showing our Pakboat, the *Ruddy Duck*, with front portion of sprayskirt, loaded with four Duluth packs

cuts through several of these ridge systems on its way to the coastal plain. The first one is a few miles downstream and is our target for today’s camp.

We methodically assemble the canoe and position our load of four Duluth-style packs. These are lined with 6mm plastic bags which in turn are lined with fabric bags (to keep the plastic bags from sharp edges). This arrangement is more waterproof than a typical river bag which gets holes after a trip or two and leaks no matter how much it is patched. We take extra bags so when one gets a bad hole we replace it. The Duluth packs have the great advantage of holding a ton of stuff that can still be carried relatively easily on a portage.

We also bag our clothes and sleeping bags in trash compactor bags sandwiched between double cloth stuff sacks. This way water has to go through two bags to wet the most important items. We learned a lot of this stuff and more from Cliff Jacobsen’s terrific books on expedition canoeing. I believe that Mississippi Bob knows him and has mentioned him in these pages. Jacobsen’s signature saying is “if you do as I suggest...” which we often ridicule, but in the end he is usually right.

In the Middle of Everywhere

It’s a big thrill to push off the bank and feel the tug of current after all the preparation and air travel. We hardly have to paddle, just enough to steer. A storm that’s been brewing sweeps across the scene, punctuated with lightning and thunder over the high ground to the north where we’re headed. A brief but vigorous downpour baptizes our new rain-gear. Patchy sun returns with rainbows before long as we reach the first of several east-west ridges cut through by the river. On the west slopes above the river Lynn spots the first grizzly bears, three of them lolling along a swale about a mile away. They seem pretty inactive, hardly responding to some caribou drifting close by, but we keep an eye on them.

We pull over on an attractive gravel bar where the river begins to cut through the high ground and set our first camp. The bears are still in binocular view, a mile and a half or more upstream, and normally that would keep us from camping here. But, we argue to our-

selves, there are bears everywhere up here whether we can see them or not and predicting their movements is impossible so why drive ourselves crazy trying to hide from them?

Bears, Bears, Bears...

Grizzly bears are always a major topic of conversation when you say you’re going to Alaska. We’ve seen grizzlies on all of our Brooks Range trips. The Utukok uplands were supposed to have a very high grizzly bear population so we expected them. As opposed to the typical National Park bear, most of these grizzlies have probably rarely or never encountered humans. In our previous experience they have all moved away from us, although some scared us with a bluff charge or preliminary sniffing and reconnoitering before turning tail. We’ve never had them take food or disturb camp, they apparently do not associate people with food. Expecting this “wild bear” behaviour we took no firearms, although the pilot offered to loan us his shotgun and slugs. Instead we carried pepper spray and noise-makers (compressed air yacht horns and whistles). Subsequently we heard about a north slope bear that killed an adventuring couple who sounded a lot like us, except they did have a gun but didn’t get the chance to use it. So next time we might take firepower.

Meanwhile, back at bear-view camp we enjoy a fabulous scene. Resting in our chairs with binoculars handy we watch herd after herd of migrating caribou cross the river just above and just below our camp. It’s non-stop action. The herds seem concerned with the safety of the calves and several times an adult re-crossed to gather up a wayward calf and help it across the swift current. Next we hear a snort from across the river and a troubled adult caribou is looking across at us... actually behind us, at its calf stranded on the bluff edge above the gravel bar. The poor calf is bleating “ow-ow-ow” and staggering clumsily along the edge, almost tumbling down to probably die or be mortally wounded at our feet. We watch this painful spectacle and finally realize that to some extent the calf has imprinted on us in its effort to get down the bluff. So we walk upriver with it following us until the bluff sloped down to brush and a

snowbank. At this point the calf came down to rest in the snow and we returned to camp, hoping that mama across the river would take it from there.

The sun was out now and we decided to hike up in the high ridges above camp. We make the mistake of checking on the calf, who started to follow us again, bleating, in the wrong direction from its herd. Dismayed, we face him down, getting within 10 feet. He seems to know we are not his mother and he moves away a bit. We finally leave the poor confused thing behind and hope that he would take up with the several herds in sight that are still trooping through.

We are bedazzled by the tundra flowers. The landscape is treeless, of course, but the turf is spangled with exquisite blooms. The carpets of white Dryas with its eight-ish white petals was emblematic of the scene. A saxifrage we called the "trout flower" had lovely cream petals with ornate orange spots like the fish. Inspecting this intricate loveliness through a 10x hand lens and then leaning back to take in the 30-mile sweep of foothills extending to snow-clad mountains was almost a heart-stopping transition.

From the ridge top the views were thrilling. Restless partly cloudy sky overhead, silver river winding down the plain and looping below, brilliant flowers underfoot, and caribou on the move, taking their calves to the summer grazing grounds nearer to the coast. We come across another stranded calf and a dead adult at the foot of a small cliff. Plenty of food for someone. Extensive snow banks accent the SW facing slopes, remnants of NE blizzards.

The 24-hour Arctic day has us fooled and it's fully 9pm before we regain camp. Another storm is brewing, black, to the south. We fix a quick and supremely simple meal of Ramen noodles and Lynn notes the troubling fact that the three bears are now on the move, down to the river where we lose sight of them. As the rain starts we retreat to the tent to wait it out, talking of the day's numerous events. We hear a snort close by on the gravel bar and, thinking it's caribou in camp, I rise to unzip the tent. But I'm stopped by Lynn who spots out the back window a bear. The hind end of a tent-size bear about 10' away.

Lynn on one of our many hikes.



Yikes! One of the three, no doubt, investigating us. We grab our spray and horns and cower, peeking out at intervals. We've been told that eye contact is a no-no. The monster is ambling slowly away, looking vaguely over its shoulder. It heads up a small bank and disappears in the bush.

But before we can breathe a sigh of relief we look to our right to watch a second behemoth walk by the side of the tent even closer than the first one. "There's another one," we gasp and cower again waiting for the rip of fabric and the gnashing of teeth. We peek out, and this one, too, ambles slowly off in the same direction as the first. But we get too good of a look at its big muzzle, dark eyes, big paws, and powerfully muscled body. The thick fur is wet from the river crossing. As it disappears we know the third bear is still at large. Sure enough, lagging behind, here it comes from upriver. It bounds towards us across a shallow channel, sending up sheets of spray. We're sure this is it, we'll get our 15 minutes of fame in a newspaper paragraph. But before we can get too worked up this one veers away to join the others as they move on.

We wait perhaps 20 minutes, nothing happens, and we cautiously emerge. Tracks complete the story. The first one came within 5', then turned on catching our scent and uttered the grunt I heard. The other passed by the side. Neither one ventured to investigate our gear piled judiciously at the far end of the gravel bar away from the tent. Moral: We shouldn't have camped here in sight of bears and in the kind of gravel-bar and backwater system they seem to like to inspect. By now it's midnight and, downing a calming tequila sour, we eventually turn in after a long and adventure-packed first day on the river.

Bears remained a theme for the next nine days as we worked our leisurely way through the Utukok uplands. The river took us north across a series of east-west trending valleys and ridges. Twelve more bears were sighted, though none at the claw-counting range of the first night's trio. We camped on islands when possible for a feeling of security. We had one do a bluff charge from shore while we were floating in the river and tracks told of another coming into camp at night to sniff Lynn's boots before retreating. On our many hikes we took paddles along, imagining them being useful in poking or bonking a charging bruin. Well, better than our hands anyway. Makes us think about the utility of an old-fashioned spear, ought to be pretty formidable. Meriwether Lewis carried an "es-pontoon" (a spear of sorts) which protected him in a number of ways on that expedition.

The most notable hike we took was the day after the nocturnal sniffing of Lynn's boots. We took off to the west on the back of an interminable ridge, Archimedes Ridge. Wind blasting under grey skies, firm footing on the dry ridge top, a grizzly grazing safely below. Probably our visitor. Miles we walked on this ridge, punctuated by jagged outcrops like the back of a gigantic stegosaurus. Snow-clad Brooks Range peaks to the south. And then, after some hours, two roly-poly critters emerged ahead of us. Rolling gait, dark brown long fur ringed with a cream ruff, a curious pair, stopping at intervals to look back with dark faces and beady eyes. What we were seeing was a pair of wolverines. We tailed them for probably a hundred yards before they took refuge behind a small outcrop, popping out at intervals to spy. Then gone. Never saw them again, going or coming. That moment, on that

ridge, in the middle of everywhere, the raw wind sweeping powerfully down from the mountains under grey, operatic skies, us the only humans in God knows how many hundred miles, with the most elusive and wild of beasts, the wolverine... this was worth not only the trip, but life itself, to see.

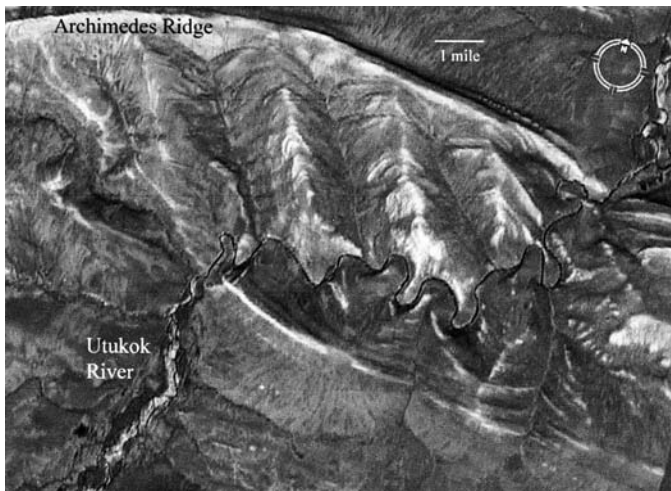
The Flood

Emerging from the confinement of a ridge system the wild river would spread from a nice, normal, single channel into a chaotic but energy-dissipating braided network with expansive gravel bars and low willows. In one such spot it was time to camp, and, despite another bear in view, we did. Next morning I rose to rain while Lynn slept on. We have a lovely multi-colored rain tarp from Cooke Sewing (another Jacobsen source) and up it went, supported by our four paddles, some of which perched on our overturned canoe. We regularly used the upside down canoe as a flat and dirt-free surface for cooking and other chores. The discipline of tarp erection, "tarpology," is a pleasurable combination of geometry, physics, hydrology, knot-tying, and constant fiddling. Great fun. I loiter under this comforting, evolving shelter watching the rain, enjoying breakfast. Instant oatmeal with dried berries and instant coffee on a Coleman Peak One stove. Then some reading in the *Naturalist's Guide to the Arctic* by E.C. Pielou. A fabulous book and author. Look for her *Fresh Water* and *Energy in Nature* for incredibly straightforward explanations of the natural world.

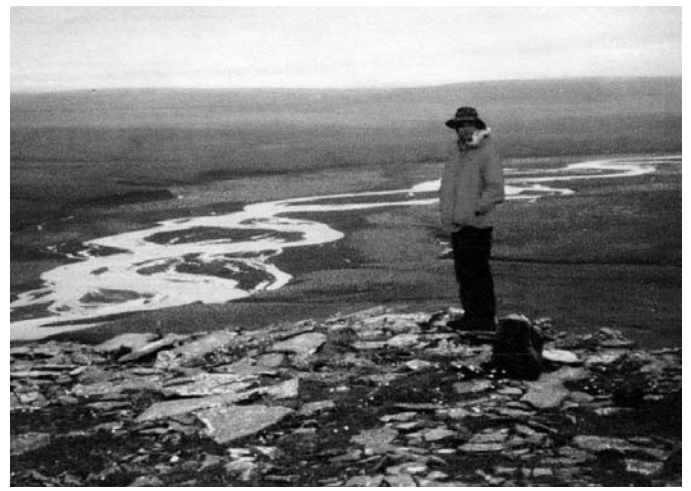
Still raining. After a good read it's time for some tea and a snack. Lynn arises finally, she's capable of an amazing ability to sleep. It's 1pm and lunch time, and the rain steadily continues. An hour or two passes and we entertain ourselves with keeping a smoldering fire of willow twigs going for a while. A merganser floats by, a few geese fly about, and a jaeger menacingly patrols across the river. Late in the day the rain lets up but clouds stay oppressively low. We enjoy happy hour and speculate on how much the river will rise. I put a stick in at about the 2' mark, thinking it a liberal estimate. Eventually to bed and more rain during the night. Next day I arise, peek out, and... a rampaging river. It had risen far above my 2' stick, 3' at least.

More markers indicate continued and rapid rising. It's within a few vertical inches of our gear and camping spot. Muddy water for breakfast and a race against the rise. By the time we've eaten and loaded the river is up to our tent site! On the surging bosom we carefully ply our craft. Powerful eddies and swirls threaten. Low overcast but no rain. A few hours later we land and hike up a ridge. Binoculars reveal that our campsite is now submerged. Before hiking we drag canoe and gear bodily from the water, tying it well above the potentially rising water level. If we lose our canoe to the flood it's pretty much all over for us.

That night we find a great island campsite. Behind the tent site two species of *Hedysarum* are interspersed. *H. alpinum*, and *H. mackenzii*. These are vetches with pea-like, purple flowers and look the same to the unschooled eye. The former has edible roots, the latter is poisonous. The difference between them is subtle, the edible one has smaller flowers and leaflets with conspicuous veins beneath. The poisonous one has somewhat larger flowers and leaflets without conspicuous veins beneath. The devil is in the details. The bears



Google Earth image of the Archimedes Ridge complex, cut through by the Utukok. Wolverines were sighted on a hike west (left) from where the river bisects the ridge.



After the flood our campsite being submerged in the distance.

are botanists, digging the edible *H. alpinum* and avoiding the other. Chris McCandless, the modern day Everitt Ruess of Alaska, was not a botanist. His early death in the Alaskan wilderness may have been in part due to poisoning by too much *H. mackenzii*, mistaken for *H. alpinum*. An hypothesis of Krakauer, author of *Into the Wild*.

We have a food problem of our own. We had hoped for at least some fish but the turbid floodwaters have ruined our chances. So we invent a new meal, "Utukok pizza." Heat some peanut oil in a thick-bottomed frying pan. Fry a piece of pita bread that just fits the pan. Flip it when brown and while frying on the other side sprinkle cheddar cheese, re-hydrated onions, tomatoes, peppers, bacon bits, and dribble chipotle sauce. When the second side is browned, remove, cut in half, and eat while a second "pizza" is cooked. Three does it for two people. A pretty nice thing and a trip favorite.

This island, I don't know why exactly, has me thinking of Ireland, though I've never been there. The tundra is green, the river is green, the very rocks are green. It's grey overhead but gay nonetheless. These river rocks are quite interesting and we often find very large flat ones. One was perhaps 3' square and maybe an inch thick. Served as a marvelous table for dinner. Roughing it?? Not at all, we felt like kings eating off of such an exquisite stone surface. Naturally we are worried about being swallowed by the flood but sticks reveal a stable water level and morning finds it down even a few inches.

The ninth day of the trip has us breaching the last major ridge system before the river seeks the sprawling coastal plain. One more hike along this last endless ridge, miles and miles with expansive views that seem to suck us away into a vacuum of space, rendering us at our true scale of insignificance. Experiences like this, of boundless space, of a nature so much greater than our comprehension, are the reason for the trip. Someone who had never been to Alaska's north slope or any other wilderness once said, "man is closest to God in a garden" (or something to that effect). That's not our experience.

The mouth of Carbon Creek was met on day nine and this marked a transition from upland foothill topography to a gradual flattening of the landscape as the river turns northwestward and meanders its way to the

Chukchi Sea. Until now we had dawdled, making a mere eight miles a day. I imagine the chuckle from R. Zollitsch, that eater of miles. But there was so much hiking to do that moving downriver was a low priority. But now, with increasingly featureless terrain ahead, we had to accelerate the pace, planning an average of 17 miles per day.

A cherry cheesecake at dinner celebrated the transition from bear-ridden uplands to hopefully less worrisome country ahead. The novelty of feeling like prey had worn off pretty quickly and we were a bit tired of being on constant "brown alert" for a bruin encounter. It made us think about how fear of Indian attack must have preyed on the psyche of the frontiersman and pioneer. True enough, not another bear was seen until the very last day of the trip. Sign, however, remained obvious and played a role in campsite choice.

Wind in the Willows

The challenge of this stretch of river was wind. Any paddler of the north, particularly north of the tree line, knows the problem. Even with no lakes to cross it became our opponent. The first two days we made

our miles with little difficulty, one evening enjoying a massive downpour from under our pleasant rain tarp, sipping tea, watching the puddles fill on the gravel bar. Snowbanks became increasingly prominent, particularly in the lee of a long bluff to the north that followed the river all the way to the coast, the edge of its floodplain.

Then came a series of days with wicked northwest winds, directly in front of us. We had three strategies for coping. First, sit and wait. This works fine when there is a nice cut-bank shelter or willow hedge to hunker behind, and if we have patience or some wildlife to watch, usually geese or other waterfowl, in a similar situation. Second, pull the canoe downriver against the wind with lines. One person can do this pretty well, tie the bow and stern lines together and grab hold of this line at a spot where when we walk parallel to shore, the bow angles out further from the shore than the stern. The upriver wind against the canoe creates this angle. Then we just trudge along the gravel bar until the river takes a bend. Jump into the canoe and cross over to the gravel bar on the other side and continue. The third strategy was just

A typical gravel bar camp on the coastal plain, the canoe bottom makes a handy table.



to paddle, feathering the blades on the return to minimize drag, down on the knees for the same reason, and gut it out. Great exercise but hard on the steersman's wrists for sure.

Three days of fighting to the tune of the ceaseless wind bending down the arctic felt-leaf willows, hardly the idyll implied by the title of *MAIB*'s namesake novel. Lost miles to boot has us behind schedule. It's not as bad as I thought, though. We ended up having an extra day because in planning the schedule I'd counted the day we flew in as day zero, whereas during the actual trip I'd been counting that day as day one. The genius of a simpleton. Our camps sought the shelter of cutbanks or willows. One evening on a turn about the gravel bar we looked down and there was a huge fossil mammoth tooth. We've heard of finding entire beasts in slumping banks along the river, preserved in the permafrost. We pass plenty of these large banks, hulking with black ice dripping and slumping. But no carcasses.

Bears are blissfully absent but at one especially nice-looking campsite we had to move after finding a disturbingly huge and fresh track. Caribou, too, are much less frequently seen here. The wildlife highlights are the waterfowl and to vary the day we take a few hikes out to adjacent tundra ponds to see who's floating. Tundra swans, red-throated and Pacific loons, red and red-necked phalaropes are among 45 species sighted on the trip. The weather continued blustery, partly cloudy, and cool, in the 40s at midday on some days. We took to having hot soup at lunch, a great morale builder. Once we were heckled by a Baird's sandpiper while lunching in his territory.

One miraculously calm day we made up time with a Zollitsch-like 27 miles, no lollygagging on a nice day. We start to near the coast and the land flattens out. Our last landlocked camp was on a vast gravel bar on which we spotted the trip's most unique artifact, part of a curved mammoth tusk. We were doing very well on time with six days left and only 45 miles. This was intentional because we've been up here enough to know that on big water like the upcoming coastal lagoon we can get pinned down for days. If not, we'd have plenty of time to poke our way down the coast and explore.

The next morning we woke to grey, cold skies. The day's challenge was to negotiate the complex Utukok delta, staying to the south at all costs so as to camp at the south-

ernmost mouth on the lagoon. It's a place marked "Tolageak" on the map, an old, long-abandoned Inuit site. We proceeded very carefully, trying to identify the crucial junction where we needed to take the south channel. We key in the coordinates on the GPS and we're pleased to have it confirm our independent decision based on reading the map. The clouds are very low today and a light drizzle sets in. Despite hot soup, lunch time on a low gravel bar is cold, and what's more disturbing, a brisk south wind gets up. We pass our personal farthest north (70°3'24") and begin to approach the broad southern mouth of the wide Utukok delta.

To the west, nothing now but low gravel bar and ocean. To the southwest, a long dark, peaty bluff marking the terra firma at the delta's south end. Towards this we head through a wide, shallow channel. This becomes a desperate slog as the wind builds to the 30+ mph range howling out of the south. Grit and determination gets us there, plus the fact that the channel is shallow enough that we can push off against the bottom. Finally, after what seems an age, we gain the slight lee of the bluff and paddle up under it to rest. After this much deserved hiatus we move westward towards the mouth and Tolageak. A few hundred yards from the spit at the mouth we pull over and pitch camp on the grassy tundra. No shelter from the south but for a low hill but we make the best of it.

We walk down to the Tolageak site but initially see nothing but some rusting oil barrels and lots of driftwood. The lagoon is churning and turbid with ugly whitecaps from the rising south wind. No going on today even if we wanted to. Lots of foxholes and bear droppings are about. Further exploration yields the remains of the traditional dugout sod huts of the Inuit from the former glory days of Tolageak village. A desolate spot to be sure, especially under these wind-whipped grey and cold skies. As if the setting needed a more somber note, on the way back we pass a grave and old wooden cross on the low rise visible from camp. Dinner that night was had down by the water under the merciful lee of the peat bluff, a rushed Utukok pizza, finished off as a cold rain began to fall. We batten all hatches and secure the vestibule of our expedition weight Eureka Timberline tent against the wind and rain.

Happy hour is enjoyed inside as the tent is lashed by rain. One problem, we pitched the blunt backside of the A-frame tent facing the

south wind and the driving rain succeeds in misting through the single layer of nylon. We should have pitched the pointy vestibule that connects on the tent front towards the wind. But anyway, we feel a sense of accomplishment here at the mouth on the Arctic Ocean, having followed our river 200 miles from its mountain birth to its ocean rest, through howling wilderness without seeing another human. Now, the task is to get 30 miles down the coast to Point Lay. After some reading we seek sleep as the gale blows. The wind keeps up all night and into the morning, shifting a bit to the west.

Purgatory in Tolageak: Stormbound

In theory, the next morning we would begin our leisurely five-day, 30-mile trip down the coast. On the first of these days, however, it appears we will be staying right here. At 9:45am, the skies are grey, the temperature 48°F, and a strong SW wind made any progress impossible. I rig the canoe as a windbreak and we breakfast in its lee, observing the shifting scene. Clouds race overhead, even revealing some blue sky and sun. Gulls hunker out on a low island in the delta. Flocks of ducks and geese fly across the lagoon. Breakfast segues into lunch and we enjoy a treat of fried bannock with dried apricots and honey. The bannock is just Bisquick, butter, and powdered milk, easy to mix up with some water for frying. A bank of cold wet clouds howls in, forcing us to retreat into the tent to read and doze. For reading we have the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, an appropriate accompaniment to our own journey of adventure. A short walk in the late afternoon confirms that conditions are still bad. Looks like a second night in Tolageak.

A tent-bound happy hour, this time the usual Tequila sours are accompanied by sardines and pretzels which serve as our dinner. Games of 20 Questions follow during which "King Oscar" of sardine fame serves as one of my answers that Lynn has yet to forgive me for. Some more reading and then sleep to the lashing of wind and rain.

The next day the wind is still bad, now from the west. Four days left but it looks like we're stuck here yet another day. There's no point in rising early so we sleep in. Eventually, about 9:30 I rise and walk out to the point to look things over. A brisk 25mph wind from the west would make any travel very difficult. I find some whale vertebrate bone remains and more sod huts. We breakfast down

Observing distant caribou. This nice campsite was abandoned after finding very fresh and very large grizzly tracks along the foot of the bluff.



Unloading to camp at "tusk" where we found a mammoth tusk. Over two weeks, and no other homo sapiens sightings, but lots of grizzly bear.



by the water below the bluff and out of the wind. We have a barometer along and notice a continued drop in pressure.

Under blustery, mostly cloudy, conditions we embark on a longish walk southwards down the coast against a stiff wind. This reveals a featureless and uninspiring coast lined with peat bluffs, clotted with driftwood and lumber, foam debris, bottles, and other flotsam drifted in from Point Lay. One stoppered bottle has a rolled up piece of paper inside. Finally, a message in a bottle! Alas, the paper is blank. After about two miles we return and have another apricot bannock lunch. The wind increases and clouds march in to block the sun. The wind has shifted now to the NW right off the Chukchi Sea and our bluff and campsite is no longer in the lee but bears the full brunt of the blast. We retreat to the tent. The pressure continues to drop and drizzle blows into the tent on the gusts. We have happy hour and a simple Ramen noodle dinner in the cramped quarters of the vestibule.

Before battening down for the night we emerge to scan the sky to the NW. A more frightening prospect I have never seen. The ceaseless cold wind is rolling grey waves into the peat bluff. A few miles across the lagoon I can hear the thunder of what must be a tremendous surf crashing against the barrier islands. And the sky was unforgettable. Fraught with blue-black clouds, brilliant, luminescent grey clouds, and narrow sunbeams shooting through down to the ocean. A hideously active and restless sky howling towards our feeble and exposed camp. The multi-day storm was raging stronger than ever as night was coming on. In that moment I realized why humans invented God, when we experience the sheer terror of nature our instinct is to take it personally. That is how we want to make sense of nature's indifference, a truth that is even more frightening.

That night was terrible, the worst that I have spent in a tent. Sleet and snow pounded the violently shaking fabric. The wind penetrated and I was cold with everything I could put on and mummified in my sleeping bag. Lynn was warmer in her bigger bag but still intimidated. Just two layers of nylon between us and almost certain hypothermia and... well, the imagination had plenty to work with as the gusts shook our fragile shelter. Eventually morning came but with no change in conditions. We are down to three days left with no prospect of moving today. The bay in front of the tent is frothed with whitecaps

and our peat bluff has caved back many feet by the waves crashing in. Sleet, snow, grey clouds, blue sky patches, and sunbeams race by in an overwrought and restless sequence.

I brought the canoe alongside the tent to provide a little more shelter. We breakfast in the vestibule. It is even colder now than before, in the 30s. Naturally we wonder if we will ever be able to leave this spot. It is getting increasingly unlikely that we'll make Point Lay on schedule. At about 2pm we finally decide to move the tent to a nearby sunken polygon that provides better natural shelter. A very good move because I don't think I could take another experience like last night. We make sure the vestibule points into the wind and we're ready to withstand another onslaught. A walk up to the morbid wooden cross and gravesite reveals the huge breakers flashing up from the Utukok pass between the barrier islands. I half expect to start seeing pack ice and polar bears blown into the lagoon. Snow drives us back to the tent.

We "amuse" ourselves with neurotically frequent checks of the barometer, when will it go up? We also scan our aviation VHF for any sign of aircraft signals. I pick up a few brief snippets on a few channels and note them. They might come in handy if we need to make contact. We calculate and enter GPS waypoints for what we hope will be a coastal journey to Point Lay someday. A check of our food indicates we have perhaps five days left beyond the two already budgeted. No doubt we could eke out more if necessary. Morbid calculations to be sure, but necessary under the circumstances. We consider walking out but this seems very unwise given the number of rivers and lakes we would have to cross along the coast. It's best to just hunker here and be patient.

Snow squalls punctuate the night and no change in the morning. Why bother getting up? Two days left and counting. At mid-morning I walk out to the point but the lagoon is still too rough. Back at noon I find the wind has shifted more to the NW and seems to be moderating. This is at least a tailwind but we'd have to cross it broadside to get to the mouth of the river before turning downwind. The whitecaps are daunting. After eating we decide to attempt an escape. Rather than struggle across the wind to the lagoon proper, we opt to portage. It feels good to be

at work again. Three trips does it, we load the canoe, carefully snap on our full spray cover, and trembling with excitement and anxiety, we step aboard. Instantly we are flying off on the waves downwind, rapidly leaving grim old Tolageak, our prison of four long days.

Flight from Tolageak

In the 20mph tailwind we have little to do but steer. We stay as close to shore as the waves permit and pretty soon we pass the southern limit of our two-mile walk down the coast. We zoom on down the coast a few more miles and it starts to trend west, forcing us off of our straight downwind course. This, coupled with rising wind and waves and darkening skies, starts to make us cold and very nervous about where this escapade is going to end. I'm also getting really hungry so we decide to land. We run up on the shallow sand beach and quickly pull the canoe free of surf. I put on more clothes and eat something. Snow squalls blast across the wild scene.

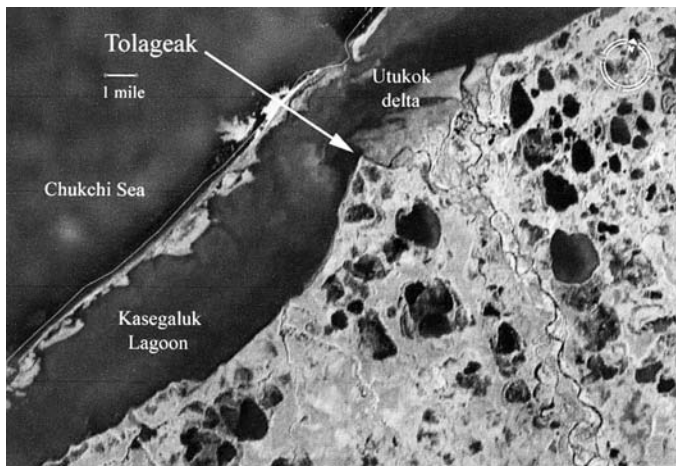
We shove off again but I'm dubious about our prospects. Before long we approach the Kugachiak inlet, about five miles from Tolageak. The spit guarding its mouth sticks out inconveniently into the fearsome grey waves of the windswept lagoon, and rather than fight around the point we portage across some low ground to the sheltered waters of the inlet. We hunker down in the substantial lee of the hills alongside the shallow coastal indentation. A driftwood fire gets us warm as the snow starts to fly. Hard to believe it is mid-July. A dinner of scrambled eggs and hash browns cools off before we can take the first bite, but it's food. We plan to continue our desperate journey if the wind drops, but by 11pm nothing's changed so we set up the tent and midnight sees us crawling inside. Tomorrow is our last day, if we don't make the 25 miles out we miss our flight from Point Lay. Not a disaster, of course, but it can seem that way.

I rise at 5:30am, look out the back window at our inlet and see only little ripples. I get up and stumble out to the lagoon. Calm, with just a whisper of a north breeze. Wow! Tired, but aware of dire necessity, we break camp and launch at 6:30am without breakfast. Our plan is to paddle like hell around Tungaich point, five miles away, before stopping to risk breakfast. We don't talk, we

Barricaded against the wind on a rare sunny moment at Tolageak.



Google Earth image of Tolageak, the site of much enforced leisure and anxiety. Note barrier islands a few miles offshore forming the boundary of the Kasegaluk Lagoon.



move carefully but quickly, we do not want to do anything to awaken the wind. It's real cold, 36°F and cloudy, but we paddle steadily and put the featureless coast behind us, negotiating the broad shallows of Tungaitch point and round its peaty bluffs. The inlet at Tungak creek beckons us and we paddle on to the beach at 8:15am, having made six-and-a-half miles since 6:30am. We stretch our legs and fire up the stove for hot brucky. In the absolute silence of the morning we hear the surf pounding away on the barrier islands three to four miles across the lagoon. The inlet is beautiful and peaceful, the nicest spot on the whole dreary coast. Lynn finds lots of amber mixed in with the drift line on the inside of the inlet. We learn later that the "Tungak" name of this site means "the devil's place," but it was plenty nice to us.

Without dilly-dallying we press on, paddling through calm water that was standing on end for the last five days. The skies begin to clear and as the day wears on we are treated to a memorable Arctic day. Such calm, such quiet, so much majestic sky puffed with fair weather cumulus over the flat landscape, merging seamlessly with the calm water, paddling in a 360° world of sky. A dreamy, bewitching landscape. We spot our last grizzly, a big one, that takes a good long look at us and then runs away. Rounding a point we behold the bulbous radar of the mothballed DEW line station at Point Lay. Still nine miles away, but ticking down... eight, seven, six, five... We remain completely paranoid that any minute the devil wind will rise and pin us down in some miserable no man's land shy of our goal. We tire a bit and pause just

once for a snack of Italian Panforte, a fruitcake of sorts as packed with calories as an energy bar.

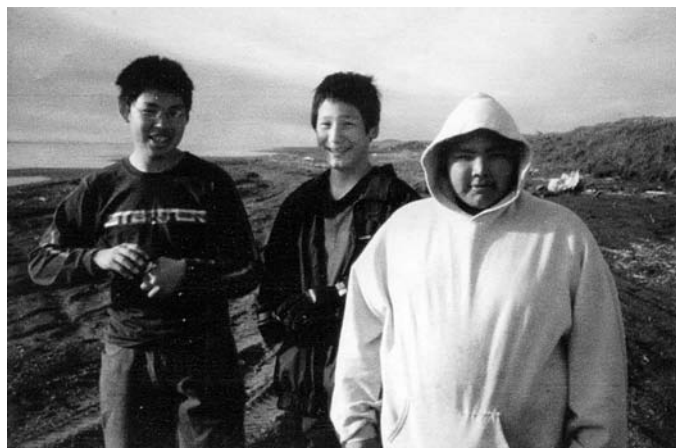
Gradually the buildings of old Point Lay out on the barrier island come into view and more details of the modern village on the mainland. Disturbingly, a squall seems to be building to the south so we do not relax our pace. An annoyingly long detour far out into the lagoon is necessary to avoid a long shoal at the mouth of the Kokolik river, but once around this it's home free and at 3pm we reach the north end of the gravel shore along Point Lay. Lynn kisses the ground. If you had told us that we'd be in Point Lay today as little as 20 hours ago, we'd not have believed it. We stretch our legs, revitalize our rumps, and set up chairs. I'm going to bathe, despite the 38° temperature, but before I can get ready, here comes the welcoming committee. Three charming, inquisitive, and informative Inuit kids, they are the first people we've seen since our bush pilot took off 22 days ago.

These cherubs ask us all about where we've been and then proceed to tell us heaps about life in the village, who still lives over on the old site on the barrier islands, how they hunt Beluga whales, where a man in a motorboat who is going up the Kokolik to scout for Caribou, where the airport, PO, school, and airport is, who can give us a ride to the airport tomorrow morning, where we can camp, who the richest people in town are, stories of polar bears and a Chihuahua that froze to death, about other crazy people kayaking through, and so forth. Eventually they depart and we can eat "lunch" in peace.

We walk through town and round up a ride to the plane in the morning. We camp on the beach close to the village and pack up, a bittersweet affair rinsing out the canoe and dismantling it 22 days after its hopeful assembly back at the driftwood "airstrip." We prepare a great feast, bannock-based Utukok pizza and cherry cheesecake, all the while conversing with another set of curious and communicative kids and their family. The kids are on their way to a hotdog grilling down by the Kokolik mouth. The adults on their four-wheelers stopped for extended chats and we learned a lot about their doings in this extreme outpost. A very memorable evening. It was sunny but still only in the upper 30s, and even the Inuit confessed that it was "cold for July" and that the storm that pinned us down was a notable affair. It seems they seldom get up to the Utukok. Point Lay got a bad rap in Jill Fredstone's *Rowing to Latitude* book but we found it a fine place.

Well, the next morning we pack everything up and begin the mind-warping journey back to civilization. Within 24 hours I'm mowing the lawn in 100° heat back in Salt Lake City. And two days later I'm attending a scientific meeting in East Lansing, Michigan. The transition is almost more than I can take, my mind is back in Tolageak, counting how many oatmeals we have left and scouting the horizon for grizzly bears. This trip was probably our most successful for shirking the complications of civilized life and getting in touch with a more elemental existence. A priceless experience that neither of us will ever forget.

Point Lay welcoming committee.



The last night at Point Lay, note shadow of Inuit photographer over the celebratory cherry cheesecake. Note also the warm clothes, 38°F in July.



I got such a kick out of that article “The Geezer and the Gimp” in the February issue that I figured the name for what I’ve been doing lately ought to be declared “Gimp Cruising.” One small sailboat, one person who needs a ridiculous amount of help to get by, and one person at a time willing to fill the dual role of assistant and sailboat crew. Ideally a procession of crew so that yours truly gets to stay out for weeks, with best hopes of not wearing out any one individual. And let’s not forget shore support, without whom the entire undertaking would be impossible.

Miraculously, this past summer and fall added up to 30 nights on the water in three separate trips. Since I’ve been pretty laid up and my usual days involve a tremendous amount of time in bed, it was quite stunning to be lying down in a boat for all that time! This fulfilled the original concept, which went something like, “if you are going to be laid up and in bed, why not be that while floating?”

The boat of the moment is a Peep Hen 14’ fiberglass microcruiser, a substantial shrinking from the previous sailboat but requiring far less agility. The crew gets the cushy berth inside the cabin and one bench seat in the cockpit is outfitted for day and night reclining. Turns out that the 2” closed cell foam from the Defender catalog, three layers thick, is stiff enough to overhang the original seat by several inches without needing any further bracing. Straps to keep the foam stack from sliding off come in handy when the boat heels and a softer cushion on top makes the whole arrangement comfortable. So there you have it, a perch not only high enough to manage standing up from, but high enough to be able to see forward over the cabin while lying down and in reach of everything from halyards and anchor line to tiller and mainsheet.

So that takes care of helpers and where to be, adding a set-up with some awning and tarp material handled the weather issue. Now how about an accessible head? The first experiment with the porta-potty in the cockpit was a bust, too low and no handholds, a perfect failure of basic access and just a week before the planned shakedown cruise! But not to worry, the carpenter friend came through beautifully with a made-to-order out-house-style seat to fit across the two bench seats at the level of the raised cushions. A milk crate holds the anchor line and, when

Gimp Cruising A Team Effort

By Shemaya Laurel



Shemaya, note “steering helper line” run over to port gunwale and back, carrying the strain of weather helm.

this crate is positioned on the far bench, just happens to offer a perfect handhold, so the plans to bolt a raised handrail onto the “out-house seat” were happily scrapped.

Miraculously the porta-potty slides perfectly under this arrangement, as does a 5gal bucket which works with disposable chemical “wag bags.” Even better, adding a board that fits across the top of the seat turns it into a perfectly located place to sit for handling halyards and anchor line as well as creating cockpit table space. Head privacy involves tinkering with awnings but is doable, and crew have their own facilities in the cabin. With those adjustments taken care of we were ready for the big splash!

The shakedown cruise took place on the Connecticut River, pretty much across the street from where I live in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Several VERY intrepid friends and assistants agreed to participate in this experiment. An untested boat, in water usually reserved for rowing shells, kayaks, and the occasional stray motorboat, folks who trusted me to teach them how to sail on the spot, and a skipper who wasn’t in the habit of going further than the driveway because of the various physical/logistical complications.

But on the other hand, previous to the big knees blowout, I had been single hand-

ing a Falmouth cutter 22 all along the coast between Connecticut and the Canadian border, out for a couple months at a time. That was with reasonable knees and low-moderate strength, but still I wasn’t walking far and sitting for any amount of time was a fairly significant problem (long-term Lyme disease has finally explained all of this). Driving cars was out of the question during that period but sailing hundreds of miles worked out just fine with all those opportunities to lie down, stand, occasionally sit, etc. So there was a precedent for this crazy new idea and a chunk of skills (read: previous learning experiences) to draw on to keep everybody safe.



Shakedown launch, left to right: Kate, Suzy, Shemaya, Suzanne.

We were set up to spend three nights on the river, with a crew change after the first night, which went as planned until the third morning when the weather deteriorated badly. So we came home a day early with a fascinating list of what worked and what didn’t and what absolutely must be changed before setting out again. The anchor roller worked like a charm. Boat launching and retrieval needed some serious improvement, establishing this provided quite a show for observers!

Shakedown departure, Holyoke.



Shakedown cruise, Connecticut River, Holyoke.





Hartford launch.



Hartford launch, left to right: Spring, Suzanne.

Guide-on posts have since helped quite a lot in that department.

The line for controlling the centerboard, emerging from under the cushions and leading back to a block and tackle, was nearly unusable and needed to be led to the other side of the boat. Sleeping was comfortable but scrambling around, particularly back and forth over the cockpit bench, is best done by people who do yoga on a regular basis. Luckily for everybody the rotating crew list is substantial so those who made these discoveries were able to pass this information on to the next individual arriving with fresh energy for further refinement!

That first trip took place in July and we spent a month after that fussing in the driveway before setting out again. For the next expedition we towed the boat to Hartford, a half-hour drive that placed us in the river below the dam and rapids at Enfield. A straight shot to the ocean! With south winds for days, this direct line to salt water didn't exactly go fast but it was fascinating checking out places like Crow Point Pond, waking up at anchor all by ourselves in the morning mist.

On the fourth night a major front blew through, waking us up with great drama at about 11pm. We were tucked in, protected by the shore, and woke up again the next morning to the most perfect north wind anybody could ask for. We had slept across from Hurd State Park, south of Middletown, and barreled the

last 23 miles to the coast all in one day, double reefed and sometimes with the gaff dropped horizontal to spill more wind. The day after that the wind continued and we sailed another 20 miles east along the coast to Mystic.



Lots of bridges on the Connecticut River.

Tired but happy, we met up with shore support at a marina in Mystic for a crew change and some further boat adjustments. This boat is powered by an electric trolling motor. One amp solar panels don't make much of a dent in the charging in the face of a motor that draws 13 amps on slow speed. So we discovered! And when the battery is down to 11.9v (with no load) the propeller turns slowly enough that the blades do not disappear in a blur and will not move the boat upstream in a gentle current. On the bright side, we ran for almost a week before discovering that last part, being a sailboat after all. And got where we needed to go regardless, thanks again to the sailboat part and a pesky but usable headwind for that last half-mile to the dock.

On the not so bright side, since we didn't know ahead of time one way or the other, the shore power charging set-up had been optimistically left unfinished before departure, thinking that the solar panels might do the trick. Never enough time for all the necessities before leaving, especially for the ones you're not sure you'll need! But never fear, Mystic has a West Marine which was happy to provide the necessary parts in exchange for a ridiculous amount of cash. Three days of observing dock life later, well rested, battery fully charged, and with another intrepid crew person, we were off down the river.

So it went, 2½ weeks on that trip with a total of three different crew, gradually refin-

Sunrise, Crow Point Pond, Wethersfield, Connecticut.



Suzu and Shemaya, crew change at Giants Neck, Niantic.



ing a system that started to work pretty well. We sailed back to the Connecticut River with some time along the way around Fishers Island, swimming at Flat Hammock, and dodging ferries off New London, and then about 10 miles back up the Connecticut to Deep River, where we pulled the boat out. It was an outstanding trip.

Amazingly that boat hit the water again in late October. This time there were a few complications with seasick crew (how could I have forgotten THAT interview question)? But we ended up with some very pretty time in the creeks near the mouth of the Connecticut. October was so warm that this even included more swimming, after the first couple days and nights of absolutely freezing when I thought I was entirely out of my mind. But it turns out that if I splurge and cracked open TWO of those 12-hour chemical hot packs I could be pretty cozy even when it was freezing out.

So now it's winter and the Peep Hen is doing its cute 14' boat trick of fitting entirely inside the garage. And plans are afoot for when the weather warms up. Here's hoping for Maine!

Endless thanks go to the many people who helped make all this adventuring possible:



Rachel, Connecticut River.



Steph on Long Island Sound.

Crew: Kate Fahey, Suzy Polucci (twice), Spring Beckham, Rachel Gimbel, Judy Schultz, Stephanie Jo Kent (twice), Theo Fadel, and Beatrice Sceske.

Shore Support: Suzanne Jean, Kate Fahey, Spring Beckham, Megan Tady, Blanca Zelaya, Henri Jean, Theo Fadel, Matt Griswold, Annie Keough, Doris Jean, Sandy Ward, Tim McElroy, and Gaeton Andretta (who kindly participated in boat hauling after we met on the river).

Fixing up the Boat: Suzanne Jean, Rachel Gimbel, Emily Miller, Xylor Jane, Theo Fadel, Spring Beckham, Megan Tady, Blanca Zelaya, Henri Jean, Susan Masters, Cuiee Masters, Aveour Masters, Kate Fahey, Brewer Pilots Point North Yard (great bottom paint). And thank you to the fellow in the kayak who carried our anchor out to the middle of the Back River so we could pull ourselves off the bank!

(Shemaya Laurel lives in Holyoke, Massachusetts, where she stays in and out of trouble, advocating and organizing for the well being and clean-up of the Connecticut River.)



Over 2" of rain and enormous wind the previous night, still basically dry inside! Inflatable radar reflector still on mast from previous day's sailing.

Swimming in Selden Creek.



Beatrice and the camp stove. Propane cylinder slides into mounted 4" PVC, holding the stove stable.

Headed home for winter, left to right: Beatrice, Gaeton, Theo.



A few years ago Jenny and I were looking through brochures, trying to plan a camping trip. A three-word description of one of the campgrounds caught our attention, "boat access only." Having recently built a MacGregor sailing canoe, I was interested in giving it a try and Jenny was easily convinced. We booked Site 49 on Lower Saranac Lake in New York over the internet using ReserveAmerica.com and set out on Memorial Day weekend to try out canoe camping.

We arrived at the launch point mid-afternoon, having driven eight hours from Philadelphia. After registering for our campsite we received a map and basic directions for getting to the site, a two-mile paddle from the launch site. Reality hit when we approached the task of getting ourselves and all the camping, sailing, and cooking gear into the 15'8" canoe. The canoe has low freeboard when empty so it truly becomes a careful balancing act when filled to the gunwales with gear. On our first camping trip it required more than one journey to get all our gear to the campsite, but we've learned a lot since then, perfected our packing techniques, and have since had some great camping trips in the canoe.

I had camped with my family in upstate New York, spending time at campgrounds on the St Lawrence that provide an area for a vehicle and a soft spot for a tent. Determined to get the most from waterfront camping and

Canoe Camping In the Adirondacks

By Andy Slavinskas
(Reprinted from the *Mainsheet*, Newsletter
of the Delaware River Chapter TSCA)



inspired by the two most notable craft associated with the area, the Adirondack guideboat and the decked sailing canoe, I decided to build a small canoe of my own. I built my MacGregor undecked to combine the best of the Adirondack guideboat, which can carry ample supplies for extended voyages, and the sailing canoe, which is pleasant when the wind breezes up.

During our first weekend at Saranac we quickly discovered the pleasures of boat ac-

cess only campsites. We had a multiple acre site entirely to ourselves, the nearest campsite was a half mile hike over rocky wooded terrain. The lake was quiet and almost empty of powerboats, being used primarily by canoeists and kayakers. The campsites are primitive, the sole amenities are a picnic table, fire pit, and a port-a-potty, but there were large rocks to sit on and watch the sunset, grassy knolls for the tent, and many small bays and coves to explore. That first weekend was stormy and cold but we were able to sail in Pope Bay next to our site and to venture further down the lake.

A thunderstorm provided us with a wild ride back to camp, testing the boat and our abilities to stay afloat. We discovered how effectively the mountains channel the wind and hide approaching storm clouds, giving us little warning of fast-moving squalls nearby.

On subsequent trips we have paddled through the Upper Locks to the breathtaking scenery of Middle Saranac Lake. It's a good day trip and a dramatic passage on the narrow winding river into water meadows filled with lilies. The journey through the locks itself is an adventure as the water rushes into the lock (operated by a park ranger) while we cling to ropes hanging from the side.

The great advantage of the sailing canoe is that it provides the option to sail when the wind picks up. When paddling, we set the mizzen and have the mainsail rolled up but



Loading the canoe at the Lower Saranac Lake launch site.

Our compact tent is easy to carry and has more than enough room for two.



The view into Pope Bay with Ampersand Mountain in the background.

Paddling through dense forest on our way to the Upper Locks.



ready to go at a moment's notice. We've also found that steering with the tiller helps direct our paddling when the wind and waves are contrary. The sailing rig weighs very little so it isn't a nuisance to keep it aboard. And when the breeze picks up, it's all worth it, especially when cruising by other canoes.

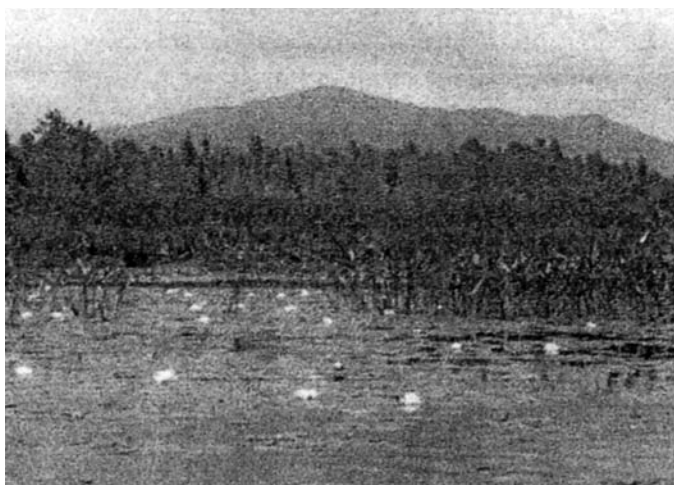
There are a few guidelines that we've developed for packing and paddling a canoe laden with gear: get a modest-sized tent, opt for self-inflating (Thermarest-style) sleeping pads, and take only the most essential clothing and camping gear. We use dry sacks of different sizes and shapes for the gear since they can be squeezed to fit the hull of the canoe. We've stopped bringing strawberries and an

extensive variety of fresh fruit and vegetables with us, instead opting for dried foods like fruit strips, macaroni and cheese, risotto packets, instant oatmeal, and soups that can be reconstituted with water and cooked in a single pot. This saves a lot of space in the canoe and enables us to fit all our food into a bear canister which can be hung from the trees.

The local critters (a raccoon, a deer, and possibly something bigger) visited us on our first camping trip and since then we've found it easier to sleep if everything, toothpaste included, is up in the trees. With some advance planning and thought we can fit the necessary gear and two people into the canoe. Canoe camping on Saranac Lake

has become an annual and much anticipated event for us every summer.

The State of New York has a vast system of parkland. Two of the larger offices for information on camping are the New York State Office of Parks and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. There are two museums in the area that are sure to provide inspiration for boat building and canoe camping: The Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, New York, and the Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain Lake, New York. St Regis Canoe Outfitters sells a wonderfully detailed topographic map called the Adirondack Paddlers Map which shows up-to-date portages, trails, and numbered campsites.



Once through the locks, we found the scenery opens up to water lilies and grass.



The canoe is loaded and we say good-bye to the campsite after a gorgeous weekend.

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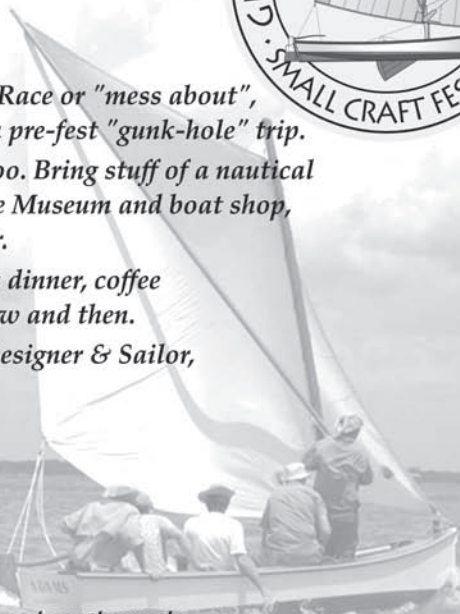
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It was a warm day in January '07, temperatures in 70s with gusty SW wind Force 5 here in Tidewater Virginia where I live. I headed for Bomuns Creek. Bomuns is a good place to kayak in a gusty SW wind. The ramp is close to the Potomac River and the shore runs NW to SE. I usually paddle to the SE, staying close to the shore out of the wind. The shoreline is natural and undeveloped for a mile and half. When I got back to the Bomuns ramp near dusk I noticed wild turkeys were starting to roost not far away. I tried to sneak up on them. I enjoy walking in the woods and come across turkeys often. As soon as they hear me, they will fly away.

However, what they would do if I were in a kayak, I did not know. As I got close I paddled slowly. There must have been about 40 of them starting to roost in a mixture of pines and hardwoods on a small peninsula in Bomuns Creek. The turkeys could see me but I was careful not to make noise. Some would start to walk up and down a tree limb for a while, then settle down. They would start to cackle ever few minutes or so and then settle down. A few decided they did not like the situation and flew to some trees further away. Most stayed where they were. When I got next to the shore the turkeys were overhead in the trees. They knew I was there but did not fly. After a while I paddled away from the shore. The turkeys were content to remain roosting for the night.

On another day in January I was kayaking at Gardy Millpond, which has a state boat ramp and is near where I live. Down one of the branches of the pond turkeys were feeding in the woods. I got close to shore, they did not pay any attention to me and just kept scratching in the leaves. Across the shore from the turkeys there was something that, as a Messer, I hate to see. The first of the building lots that had been sold was being developed. All of the small trees and laurel that were down the 50' bank were cleared. Some of the bigger trees were left but not enough to stop the erosion in the future. I guess if someone pays big money for a lot they want to look at the water, but their pricey, cut down lot looks like hell from the water.

The worst destruction of a riverbank that I have seen was on the Piscataway Creek. From the landing on Route 17 I paddled upstream. There was some development along the creek but the banks had not been cut down and the houses blended in with the woods. After about a mile I came upon the wide area of the shore that had been clear-cut down to nothing. A few houses were built on the top of the rise of the bank. A switch-back gravel road had been cut into the bank down to the water. An ugly pier topped off the scene. This was not a steep bank but a long, sloping, eroded bank. I continued on to the end of the creek about two miles further. However, the day was a disappointment after seeing the destruction of the bank.

Under the bridge going out the creek lies some of the remains of a sailing vessel. At low tide the large centerboard case with centerboard still inside and part of the bow are still visible. I cannot remember seeing an abandoned vessel that was clearly a sailing vessel. In days gone by old boats were laid up together in coves and along the creeks. However, those boat graveyards are all gone. Some solitary boats still can be found. I saw a wooden cabin cruiser that only had been abandoned a year or so. A disturbing trend is finding fiberglass boats being abandoned.

Boating 2007

By Floyd Thompson



Another location on the Potomac that is good to paddle from in a gusty SW wind is Westmoreland State Park. For about two miles going downriver there are 150' cliffs on the right. Staying close to the cliffs, I get a backwind that comes over the cliffs and pushes inshore while the SW wind 100 yards away is blowing offshore. I kayaked Popes Creek starting from Westmoreland State Park as there is no public access at Popes Creek. Popes Creek is undeveloped and most of it is protected. Wakefield on Popes Creek is the birthplace of George Washington. A colonial building and visitor center is on the grounds. Popes Creek has a narrow entrance to the Potomac River. George Washington's great-grandfather jumped ship near the creek and decided to settle. I am curious if the Popes Creek entrance was wider and deeper than it is now. Because of soil erosion the Chesapeake Bay creeks are much more shallow than during colonial times.

As I kayaked past Wakefield I saw something that I did not expect to see, next to where George Washington was born, in this day and age. We hear so much about the cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. However, here on a warm summer day was the pastoral scene of 30 cows wading in Popes Creek under the shade of sycamore trees.

About two years ago, after unloading trash at the county dump, I saw a wooden canoe. It was a 16' V-bottom plywood canoe. I checked it out, it was damaged, two holes in the bottom and a seat and cross pieces broken. I got permission to take it. When I got home I announced it was my lucky day, I just got a boat from the dump! My wife's response, "that is just wonderful." I really did not know how this canoe was going to fit into my boating. Since I do not live on the water I needed to be able to transport it easily by myself or I would not use it. As the summer was almost over I stored it away and said to my wife that I would think about how I would use and transport it.

During this past summer I repaired the canoe. For positive flotation I got some pour-in foam and made molds under the two canoe seats. I covered the foam with canvas, sewing the canvas together and using contact glue. I also added some pour-in foam to the bow and stern. I ordered a small aluminum trailer for the canoe that I assembled. It had T-bolts set in grooves to attach the parts together. I got a boat registration as I wanted to use an electric motor sometimes. As I had no history about the boat, the VDGF gave me the default category of Jon Boat build 1972.

My first trip in the canoe after several tryouts was early December on Nomini Creek. I launched from McGuire's Wharf.

This was going to be an 8½-mile round trip. I set up my large cushion that has bottom and back on the bottom of the canoe, electric motor on the starboard side and battery forward. I used the 30lb thrust motor for the first two-and-a-half miles. Top speed was just under 4kts. I shut off the motor and stored it forward while paddling with a kayak paddle.

Nomini Creek does not narrow until near its end, one branch heading east, the other south. At this intersection is the old colonial landing for Nomini Hall Plantation. In its early days tobacco would have been loaded from the landing to vessels bound for England. A notable event about Nomini Hall has been left out of most history books. In the year of 1791 Robert Carter III, the largest slaveholder in Virginia, at Nomini Hall provided in a Deed of Manumission for freeing of almost all of his 509 slaves over a period of 20 years. He gave or rented land to some of them. Not too far away is one of the few documented slave cemeteries. The sunken graves are down the side of a ravine.

I choose the east branch to continue to see how far I could paddle. One reason I choose this branch is that I live on the headwaters of Tavern Run, about five miles up from here, that flows into the Nomini. I turned around after being stopped by a fallen tree. After paddling two miles back in calm wind I started the trolling motor, but after a mile the battery was running down. I continued until my speed dropped below 2kts. I paddled the last half mile back the Wharf. The battery and 30lb thrust motor have a four mile range.

I have a 19' Rhodes centerboard sailboat. Mid-summer on the bay is hot and we do not get many good opportunities for sailing. So if it looks like a sea breeze will come up in the afternoon I can be tempted out to sailing with a light breeze, but then it can die out and I feel like a sucker for taking the bait and ending up on a desert with a mirage of water all round. I thought back about a day of sailing in Maine out of Stonington when hot temperatures were breaking records all over Maine. The locals were complaining about the heat wave. I just smiled, I might not know about cold winters but I did know what Chesapeake Bay hot was (water temperature 80 degrees and air in 90s and high humidity and no wind). People from Florida visit the Chesapeake Bay area in mid-summer and say, "It's too hot, we need to get back to Florida."

On that day in Maine my wife and I were sailing between islands off Stonington. Close to the lee side of the island we would feel a big 15° temperature change. Then, while tacking between islands, I saw a nude woman walking along the rocks. She was with a group of women who had kayaked to the island. My wife accused me of deliberately sailing close to shore to see this nude woman. I made one attempt to deny it and then made another excuse. When am I ever again going to see a nude kayaker during a heat wave in Maine?

During the summer I sailed on the Rappahannock. I launched at the Simonson public landing and arranged to keep the R19 at a private dock overnight for a day or two. One warm day I caught the ebb tide with a SE wind Force 3 and tacked down the Rappahannock for about nine miles. While tacking down near Belle Island I was able to follow a pod of 30 porpoise for a while. The bottom of the R19 is white gel coat, some of the young porpoises seemed to be interested in the hull, when they got too close adults would appear to chase them away.

A similar thing happened in Rockland Maine, several years ago. We were sailing near the town dock and saw people in the water. As this was an unusual sight in Penobscot Bay, we sailed over to see what was going on. A baby beluga whale was near the dock and women, not men, had jumped in the water next to the whale. The white baby beluga was lost and had been around the dock for about two weeks. It swam over to us and swam alongside and even got behind us and pushed against the transom.

I had three sails this year on which I sailed around Smith Point, which is at the entrance to the Potomac River. I read *Celtic Tides* by Chris Duff this summer. Chris expresses his emotions and feelings of kayaking the west coast of Ireland. He was drawn to the big seas breaking on the black cliffs. I could identify with his feeling of passing around the headlands. On my first sail the forecast was for an east wind Force 4. I got my wife to drive me to Little Wicomico. The R19 was docked at Smith Point Marina. I got underway late morning, the wind was Force 3, and I set the cruising spinnaker. The wind gradually increased to Force 4. It was sunny and clear and as I sailed up the Potomac River I noticed I had not seen any other boats on the water. It was somewhat odd that I had not seen one.

Therefore, I looked for them as I sailed the 20 nautical miles to the Yeocomico River, averaging 5-5.5kts. Never saw another boat. As I sailed into Sandy Point Marina, my favorite marina close to home, a man was launching his boat, the first one I saw! Sandy Point Marina is a shallow water marina that has been owned by the same family for years. Most boats there are 20' or less in covered slips. They allow overnight docking next to the boat ramp. At low tide I can see the bottom. The boat ramp is made of wood and is steep with piers on either side.

This simple, narrow wooden boat ramp is better than the concrete ones. As boats have gotten bigger and bigger the larger marinas have such built high docks that it is hard for someone in a small boat to get out on them. Some do not even have a ladder to climb up on. One of the reasons I did not see any boat while sailing up the Potomac River was because most are big boats and the higher gas prices seem to deter people from boating. In addition, I think another reason that is not talked about much is that young people are more afraid of the water than they used to be.

This summer a long-time friend bought a 26' wooden trimaran. The price was right and he said he always wanted one. I tried steering him to a fiberglass one on a trailer without success. He asked me to help him sail his new tri from the Rappahannock River to Nomini Creek on the Potomac River. I was leery of committing to this as I had not seen the boat. Because the man who sold him the boat helped him sail it from Mobjack Bay to the Rappahannock River, I assumed things were in working order. We planned to get away about 1:00 in the afternoon and sail thought the night until we got to Nomini Creek. But we did not get away until after 6:00.

When I saw the old two-cycle outboard motor I started thinking, I am too old for another adventure! After calling the previous owner on the cell phone and getting more information, we got the motor started and motored out the channel and raised sail. The wind picked up to Force 4 from the south as we rounded Windmill Point. We were sail-

ing up the bay wing and wing with the main and jenny making 7kts. I had never sailed a trimaran and did not know what to expect. The wheel steering was hard, the boat did not track very well. When it started to get dark we tried the navigation lights. After calling on the cell phone again, still no lights.

We rounded Smith Point in the dark, the moon would set around 2am. We made good time up the Potomac and arrived at Nomini Bay after moonset. We tried the motor but it would not start. We started tacking to the creek entrance and lost steering. As it was after 3am we anchored for the rest of the night. In the morning we made a call to a friend whose dock was our destination. He said he would get a neighbor to tow us in. A 150 four-cycle Honda slowly towed us in. I am not big on motors but I like a four-cycle outboard.

The day before I had insisted on leaving my truck at our destination. I have learned after a trip on someone else's boat it is a good idea to be able to make a quick and graceful exit. This trip brought back memories of another boating day with the same friend over 30 years ago. We were a crew on a 60' schooner. The owner needed some extra crew to sail his schooner from the Yeocomico River on the Potomac River to Norfolk, Virginia, in one day. The other crew member was a one-armed man who had crewed on the schooner before. My friend and I had never been on the vessel.

We got underway early in the morning with a forecast of strong NW wind. We motored down the Potomac under a calm wind. The depth finder broke, the owner started to become nervous as the schooner drew 9'. The wind came out of the south. We sailed for a few hours close hauled until it became obvious the wind was not going NW and we would not get to Norfolk that day, so we sailed back up the Potomac. The nervous owner started working with the motor and as a result it was out of commission.

Sailing into the Yeocomico River the owner ran into a red nun buoy trying to tack. The bowsprit was tangled up in the buoy. My friend was ordered to get in the skiff that had an outboard and tow the schooner loose. He managed to tangle the towline in the outboard motor on the skiff. The owner now was cussing anyone in sight. I retreated aft as far as I could go! The one-armed man came to the rescue and freed the schooner from the buoy. After the schooner was moored the owner left in the skiff cussing and drinking. We had no way to get to shore so after some time the one-armed man volunteered to swim to shore and get the skiff for us.

The third trip around Smith Point was from Fleeton. The R19 had been moored at a friend's dock. The dock was always a short one because they used to have cows. In order for the cows to get around the farmhouse on the water to the pastures on either side, they would have to wade in the creek and walk around the pier. My friend's grandfather was a schooner captain in the 19th century. He brought back a load of cypress from North Carolina and built a large farmhouse. In all the years he knows of, only one board has been replaced, but he says the house is like it was built, not insulated, which is why the cypress is in such good shape and holds paint.

The wind was Force 4 SE. After rounding Fleeton Light I sailed between two rows of fish traps. The five miles from Fleeton to Smith Point must have more fish traps than anywhere on the bay. Past storms have been hard on the fish traps. Many nets have been damaged and

some have not been replaced, but most trap stakes are still there. The waves were about 2' but as I crossed the bar at Smith Point they decreased. About six miles past Smith Point I was becalmed in a wind shadow. The wind ahead was from the S, behind me it was SE. It felt like a mini-doldrums, wind ahead and behind. After about a half hour I was out of it and sailed on to Bomuns creek.

Later on in the fall a friend and I were kayaking the headwaters of the Little Wicomico River, we were in shallow water less than a foot. We saw a school of fish forming a wave as they fed on minnows. The school would break up, then reform repeatedly. A muddy trail was visible in the water where a fish was chasing minnows. When we kayaked over the wave of fish we could feel and hear them hitting the bottom of the kayak. We assumed the fish were mud shad but never could see one because of all the mud they stirred up.

My last canoe trip was a trip as a volunteer on a survey of beavers on Cat Point Creek. I had done this once before. There were six of us in three canoes. We measured the depth of the water in the down streamside of the beaver dam, length, and GPS position. We measured a lot of them as there seem to be one after another. Beaver dams prevent fish from spawning upstream. Someone had invented something one could put in a beaver dam and the fish could get through. One purpose of the trip was looking for the possibility of allowing fish to get past the beaver dams.

This last trip was different as our leader had not had time to schedule this in the fall. However, he was determined to make a run up the creek. So now the first week in January, temperatures just above freezing and ice in the creek, the four of us in two canoes started off. Our leader started at a fast pace, not stopping for any measuring, and just kept going faster. I was in the trailing canoe trying to keep up but we just kept falling behind. To cross a beaver dam one or both of us, wearing waders, would get out and pull the canoe over the dam, then paddle and break ice to the next dam. When we got to the turn-around point our leader did let us rest some before the return trip.

We have an overpopulation of beavers here in the Northern Neck. They have no predators and few people are trapping them for pelts. In the cooler months of the year I like to walk in the woods in the ravine along the creeks. I hate to see beaver gnaw the big white oak and beech trees that are too big for them to bring down.

Loggers did not used to cut the beech along the creeks but now they make pallets out of them. I know of a crew of three men who come from Madison County about 100 miles from here. They select cut Princess-tree, cherry, and white oak in the Northern Neck and take the logs across the mountains to Shenandoah Valley. The cherry and big white oak logs are for veneers, some of it going to Europe. The most valuable is the Princess-tree, that goes to Japan for bridal chests. Our local mill cuts timber for pallets and treated lumber.

In the days of sail Maine schooners brought ice and stone to Washington, DC. They returned with knees of white oak from the Northern Neck for shipbuilding on the northeast coast. Now, after logging the big white oaks, knees lay on the forest floor slowly rotting away. When I see them, sometimes I think of one of the best books on sailing I have read. It is the *Flying Cloud* by David

Shaw, the true story of the record-breaking maiden voyage of the clipper ship *Flying Cloud*. I got the feeling that Captain Creesy and his wife, Ellen, the ship's navigator, were

sailing this clipper ship like a small boat. On one particular day after rounding Cape Horn with big long following seas, the chip log was not long enough to record the speed. Captain

Creesy allowed passengers on deck to view the scene. At noon Ellen took observations and worked out an accurate fix. *Flying Cloud* had set a world record for a day's run.



My father bought the Bullseye about a year after my grandfather's death. My grandmother had no interest in boating and less in paying the high haul-out, storage, and launching charges. She sold the *Impulse 2* cabin cruiser and the *Hippen* Herreshoff 12½ sailboat so, until the Bullseye, we mourned the loss of my grandfather's boats as well as the man himself.

Dad already had the little outboard that had succeeded the Amesbury skiff, the *Happy*, that was powerful enough to take the lightest of us and our friends out waterskiing. But Dad knew that I would miss sailing the seaworthy *Hippen* out across Buzzards Bay to Cleveland Light and Marion. I think he was particularly disappointed that the sale of the *Hippen* took away my opportunity to sail out well beyond Red Brook Harbor into the bay. I had enjoyed this more than any of my siblings.

For this kind of sailing the Bullseye was ideal. Its sailing characteristics were very similar to the *Hippen* as it was built on exactly the same lines. Instead of wood, though, its hull was made of low maintenance fiberglass resin. The wooden Herreshoff 12½, though a Buzzards Bay classic, was expensive to keep up. We already had a Beetle Cat, the *Bedlam Forever*, in which I raced with the Cataumet Club in Squeteague Harbor. It was great for sailing across a sheltered harbor but, unlike the Bullseye, it had no lead weight keel to

Cape Cod Harbors

Hitting the Bullseye

By Rob Gogan

keep it upright. It also had a lot of canvas for its length. These two features combined to make it fun to sail, but capsizable.

I had learned to sail in the *Hippen* with Grandie. He never sailed without a destination and usually with a question in mind. "How long does it take to sail to Marion?" or "Can you see from the water where that fire in Pocasset happened the other night?" or "Is there anybody living on Cleveland Light these days?" I had inherited his curiosity about such matters and my father knew that I would like nothing better than to continue to be able to seek the answers to these maritime mysteries with as little hesitation as Grandie.

So it was that on a fair Saturday in May we motored across Buzzards Bay in the runabout to the Concordia Boat Yard to pick up the Bullseye, which my father was to name the *Virginia* after my mother and sister. At the boatyard's shop I noted a particular block, the purpose of which I learned later was to attach to the boom to the main sheet. Its cost was

around \$4. That summer, looking at the hardware at a local boatyard, I was amazed to see the same unit on sale for \$15. Alas, there is a spectacular mark-up for any kind of marine hardware in a retail setting.

After my dad picked up the tab for the boat we headed for the dock. I sailed the brand new *Virginia* while my Dad puttered along in the runabout. He could have towed me but we were anxious to see how she sailed. Though he had served in the Navy and loved being on the water all his life, Dad never learned to sail. Competent in the adult arts of driving a car, managing a business, and getting his money's worth at a retail store, none of which I could do, he could not sail. It made me see him in a new light, particularly when we were sailing among other adults.

By then an independent teenager, I began to see the limitations that made Dad human. To me, he seemed not to belong with the other adults when the Cataumet Club had its races. I was ashamed and sorry for his nautical ineptness at the same time. I didn't have the perspective to realize then that he was doing all this for me. His favorite maritime fun was running a motorboat into a school of hungry bluefish and casting for snappers. Dad came out with me sailing a few times but his real joy in owning the *Virginia* was to give me, and those of my siblings who so chose, the opportunity to pursue our waterfront shenanigans in the spunky but safe Bullseye.



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Prescott to Bath

It was a fine morning in the latter part of June when the little sloop poked her head out of Prescott Harbour, turned west, and began her journey up the St Lawrence River toward Lake Ontario. *Full Circle*, a Tanzer 22 with Ron and Burton aboard, was embarking upon the first phase of a cruise to the expansive waters of Prince Edward Bay, at the eastern end of the great lake. Ahead lay a journey of 70 nautical miles through the Thousand Islands to Bath, in the Bay of Quinte area, where the boat would be left until the remainder of the cruise could be resumed one week later with a new shipmate for Burton.

Clearing the breakwater at 0945, we set the main and genoa, intending to sail gloriously toward Brockville. However, with a steady 10kt wind on the nose and net progress hampered by the need for short tacking up the river, matters were soon expedited by resorting to the iron jib, a 30-year-old "Merc 7.5" outboard motor. Thus, for the sake of the itinerary (the cruiser's equivalent to the corporate accountant's bottom line) a noble attempt to slice peacefully westward under sail was transformed into the wearisome din of the vibrating outboard which was to become the musical accompaniment for most of the passage in the Thousand Islands. Ron was to bear the brunt of the outboard's sonorous assault, remaining at the tiller for most of the trip's duration with Burton adroitly taking refuge on the foredeck.

The main navigational channel to the west of Brockville is constricted for a distance of about two nautical miles, bounded by the north shore and a series of islands (the Brock Group), the first of the Thousand Islands encountered from the east. These Brockville Narrows, as they are known, are entered by small, slow-moving craft with some trepidation owing to the strong easterly current and the uncomfortably close quarters with passing ships. In one particularly narrow portion of this channel, near McDonald Point, large ships sometime create severe surging along the shore due to water drawdown associated with propeller action, resulting in unusually steep waves which can make for some exciting hobby-horsing when encountered by a small vessel.

West of the Brockville Narrows the navigable channel bifurcates into the main shipping channel, following the American side along the south shore, and the small craft channel, a very narrow buoyed channel winding through shallow waters off the Canadian mainland. Here keelboats such as *Full Circle* must remain within the channel to avoid grounding, thus precluding the possibility of setting sail in this area of prevailing southwesterlies. After transiting the Brockville Narrows without incident, we decided to make for the small craft channel which would offer respite from the freighters and their steep wakes. The charts indicated that this channel passing through myriad islands would provide some of the most interesting scenery as well as several potential anchorages in the vicinity of Gananoque, the objective for this first day's run.

Progressing along this route we were delighted to discover the extent to which the natural world managed to maintain a presence in the midst of much human development. Although one can scarcely glance about in the Thousand Islands without the eyes resting upon some modest little cottage on a granite boulder or a garish summer resi-

A Cruise in the Thousand Islands and Prince Edward Bay

By John T Partington and Burton W Blais

dence broadcasting its owner's material ascendancy, the route still provides unspoiled vistas. There are marshy areas with their attendant avian wildlife. Graceful herons were seen in full flight as well as rocky outcroppings in the possession of cormorants extending their wings to dry and some stretches of wooded shoreline.

One interesting feature is the placement of osprey nesting platforms at various points along the way on islands and in the water. The osprey are able to build their nests on these wooden platforms set atop tall poles where their eggs remain unmolested. This is believed to be helping the recovery of the local osprey population. Passing under the majestic Thousand Islands Bridge the boat entered the granite splendor of Hill Island and its neighbors, winding through narrow corridors bounded by sheer rock faces and steep gravelly embankments bearing cottages and bathhouses. Here the current increased, slowing westward progress.

Soon it was late afternoon and time to seek an anchorage for the night. Such was found about two nautical miles east of Gananoque in a small cove on the east side of Mulcaster Island where at 1830 the anchor was dropped and preparations made for supper. Now, *Full Circle* being a rather spartan vessel, equipped with an alcohol stove and Burton an indifferent cook, meals aboard consisted of such sustenance as could be consumed raw or prepared with boiling water. Gastronomic circumstances aside, we settled in for a peaceful evening with the boat gently bobbing at anchor.

The next morning Burton awoke to the faint sound of thunder and, poking his head through the forward companionway, made out distant flashes of lightning in the grey gloom. A thick fog was about, reducing visibility on the water to a hundred yards or so. Anxious to set off, fearing nasty weather, we breakfasted, performed our ablutions, and hoisted anchor at 0730. The morning was very quiet, no boats were out and the water was mirror-calm as we motored into the channel. Unable to distinguish land features or see very far ahead, we picked our way slowly through the fog, Burton sitting on the foredeck with the chart and binoculars in his lap, straining to see the buoys marking the way and obtaining fixes by identifying their numbers.

We came into Gananoque for gas and immediately set off again, taking the small channel running north and then west of Bostwick Island, and by mid-morning emerged into the large basin between Howe and Wolfe Islands. Here the breeze began to gather softly from the east. Weary from the constant drone of the outboard and anxious to experience some sailing, we set the sails and the motor was silenced. With still a misty prospect before her, *Full Circle* began her slow, quiet glide through the waters of the Canadian Middle Channel toward Kingston.

As we entered Kingston Harbour early in the afternoon, the mist began clearing and the breeze picked up to 10-15kts, offering the prospect of a brisk sail before putting in at

Kingston. We enjoyed a lovely afternoon's sail, jogging between Simcoe Island and the Kingston waterfront, even joining in the Easter Seal Regatta sponsored by the Kingston Yacht Club, sailing alongside the tall ship *St Lawrence II*. Late in the afternoon we entered Confederation Basin where *Full Circle* was to be moored for the night. The total distance run from Prescott to this point was 53 nautical miles, all of it against the current (a pretty good run for one and a half days under the auspices of an old outboard motor, consuming a total of about 20 litres of gas, a larger sailboat with a Diesel inboard and a determined skipper would probably have completed the trip within a single day).

Captain and crew spent the remainder of the day walking about downtown Kingston and visiting the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes with its wonderful collection of ship models and marine artifacts conveying a wisp of local history. The day was capped with a restaurant dinner and a sampling of local ale. Unfortunately, sleep in the crowded downtown marina did not come easily with the background din of human activity and some loud music emanating from a nearby nightclub.

The next morning found the lake off the Kingston waterfront calm and shrouded in fog with visibility less than one kilometer. At 0730 *Full Circle* was cast off her moorings and motored into the lake, embarking on the last leg to Bath. Passing under the ominous walls of Kingston Penitentiary, we wondered about the eyes gazing from that place upon the sight of a small boat moving freely on the lake. A course was then plotted to Bath through the North Channel between the mainland and Amherst Island. As we neared the eastern tip of that island a southerly breeze began to stir and soon *Full Circle* entered the channel with filled main and genoa.

By the time we were abreast of Collins Bay, in mid-morning, the wind was blowing 15kts from the southwest, gusting to 20kts. Tacking up the channel we rapidly closed the distance to Bath, feeling pangs of regret at the prospect of the journey ending so soon. With the wind now blowing a steady 20kt we decided to continue past Bath to the western end of Amherst Island, before turning back and finally putting in at Loyalist Cove Marina, where Burton's wife, Lisa, would be waiting to take us back home.

Soon the gusts exceeded 20kts and the seas began building as we approached the exposed waters of the Upper Gap with *Full Circle* fairly flying under reefed main and genoa, crashing through the waves and casting spray to the wind. It was sailing at its best. Sailing such as *Full Circle* rarely experienced in her home waters off Prescott where, though the wind blows there as anywhere else, the seas are rarely big enough to thrill and the lack of sea room checks her ability to run freely. Turning her prow back toward Bath she ran with the seas lashing at her stern.

As we neared our destination, preparations began to make ready for entering the small harbour. It is the custom on board *Full Circle* to bring in all sails and secure the main under its cover before entering a port, particularly when the wind is up, lest the wind catch a corner of improperly stowed sail at an awkward moment while motoring into the tight confines of a slip. Thus, about a half mile from the harbour entrance the boat was turned head-to-wind, the genoa furled and the main lowered. Burton then stepped onto

the cabin top where he began to fasten the sail cover on the main, the boat pitching and rolling in the waves.

Meanwhile Ron was in the cockpit attempting to start the outboard as the boat began drifting toward the shore. While Ron worked the starter cord trying to coax the motor into life, Burton's concern grew as the shore loomed ever closer. As he stepped down from the cabin top to render assistance, the boat lurched before his foot found the cockpit bench, the usual landing place, causing him to miss his step and instead take a much longer stride from the cabin top to the cockpit sole. Now it so happens that *Full Circle's* mainsheet tackle is fixed to a swivel pin located in the center of the cockpit floor. As circumstances would shape events, Burton's bare foot landed on that very pin.

At the exact same moment, Ron's right elbow was rocketing backwards, in mid-pull on the starter cord, finding its mark in the center of Burton's chest. The motor roared to life and Ron was able to pull away from the shore. Meanwhile, a bewildered Burton came to terms with the aches in his chest and right foot, climbed back onto the cabin top, and finished the job of fastening the sail cover, leaving bloody foot prints all over the non-skid surface. It was a gory ship that motored into Loyalist Cove that day. *Full Circle* was made fast to a dock, the dinghy pulled into the cockpit, and everything secured until the following week, when the adventure was to continue.

Bath Point to Smith Bay

One week after the first leg of the cruise, on a sultry Friday evening, a new crew comprised of Burton and John arrived at Loyalist Cove Marina and unloaded gear and provisions from the car. Burton gave his wife Lisa the cruise plan and a farewell kiss. We then turned to see *Full Circle* peacefully moored to the long center dock. It took little time to open her up, check her out, stow the gear, have a drink, and listen to the weather forecast. On the verge of a grand adventure we slept fitfully in spite of the fairy tale peacefulness of this little harbour.

A sparkling morning arrived. We breakfasted at the ominously named Last Chance Café and in short order made sail. A fresh southwest breeze swept us along the North Channel to the opening of the Upper Gap. As *Full Circle* came about onto a starboard tack a large freighter was seen in the distance easing down through the gap toward us. We assumed that the ship was going to continue north across the channel in order to dock at the nearby cement plant. On the next port tack the freighter appeared very much closer but we still felt safe. Soon, however, terror struck. The freighter began to sweep around ever so gradually toward us. There is nothing so daunting as the sight of the perfectly symmetrical bow of a rust-streaked behemoth coming right at you with "a bone in her teeth." Which way to go?

John screamed at Burton to get on the VHF. Burton, in crisp tones, "large freighter, this is the small sailboat in the Upper Gap. You are bows-on to us. What is your intention? Over." Laconic reply, "small sailboat, this is the *Tadoussac*. Hold your present course, we're gonna pass behind you. Out." Towering over *Full Circle* the steel giant slid gently astern on her way up Adolphus Reach.

Much relieved, we then began our purposeful assault against the 3' waves which

were marching into the Upper Gap from across the vast reach of Prince Edward Bay. Tacking between Indian Point, Bluff Point, Cressy Point, and Grape Island, *Full Circle* tediously worked her way up into the bay. Despite constant demands on our seamanship, we felt a sense of awe and humility confronted by the great sweep of horizon and limitless expanse of open water which appeared to brim and overflow toward our small craft. It was also exciting to imagine that back as far as two centuries ago large sailing vessels and fishing boats had plied this very same water highway, providing links between loyalists in the area and centers of industry and commerce served by ports along both sides of Lake Ontario and the St Lawrence River.

Finally we were into the bay and began wearing our way westward, conning along the cliffs toward Mary's Cove. Tired of tacking, we decided to pay the price by taking a long and patient beat far out into the bay. This earned us the luxury of an uninterrupted passage westward toward the ghostly smudge of Waupoos Island in the distance. As the wind fell just off the southeastern tip of the island, Burton emerged from the cabin with the dinners he had prepared, which we enjoyed while drifting with sails furled.

Dishes done, we motored along the western face of Waupoos Island, admiring the rural landscapes while searching for a decent anchorage. Just before rounding Pickerel Point into Smith Bay, looking to starboard toward the ferry crossing, we saw a cluster of pristine hulls and stately masts quietly sitting like a covey of geese. Eschewing the complications of social contact and the stress of anchoring close to other craft, *Full Circle* was motored cautiously into the southwestern pocket of Smith Bay. Passing a few quiet cottages to port, soon there was nothing but mirror-like water, lush trees, and fair skies ahead. One hundred meters from shore and 20-plus nautical miles from departure, ground tackle was slipped quietly down through 2' of clear water and at least 6' of waving fronds growing from beneath. The engine was reversed and the anchor set. A stunning silence prevailed. There is a quiet joy in reaching such a place, and state of mind, which is seldom encountered in daily life ashore.

Practical reality soon prevailed. John decided to explore the nearby shore to find an environmentally appropriate location for digging a temporary latrine in preparation for the next morning's inevitable post-breakfast "cry of nature." Though *Full Circle* is equipped with a "porta-potti," its use is vigorously avoided wherever suitable alternatives exist. Burton's homebuilt dinghy *Pooh* (a literary rather than functional name, chosen by son Daniel), which had exhibited marvelous seaworthiness tethered astern throughout the day's voyage, was drawn alongside. Even though Burton demonstrated how to board his diminutive prize, nothing he said could have prepared John for the bottle-like jouncing, wig-waggly passage he was to encounter before reaching shore.

But it didn't take long for the little lady to teach John how she must be handled. Soon John could be seen rowing near the shore which had appeared welcoming from a distance but which was now encountered as a tangle of low-hanging scrub, reeds, and slippery, black, partly submerged logs and branches. A small opening was found. *Pooh* entered but was immediately clutched by branches which seemed to try willfully to

yank the oars from John's now sweaty palms. Finally, the gauntlet run, a small sandy beach was reached and the necessary preparations completed, some distance up and over the bank into the woods.

After a long, eventful day and stunning sunset, it was going to be a great night for sleeping. We checked the anchor, listened to the weather, cleaned our teeth, and turned in. Surprisingly there were few mosquitoes. Soon we began to sense the gentle, womb-like shifting of the hull. Our breathing began to slow, as it usually does before the sleep "that knits the raveled sleeve of care." KA-BOOM...WHEE...(cheers, laughing, and clapping)! Burton shot bolt upright, striking his head on the V-berth ceiling. John, struggling from his sleeping bag in the quarter berth, exclaiming, "what the... (you can imagine)!" It was a pre-July first fireworks party at the nearest of those few quiet cottages along the shore. The unlawful festivities continued far into the night...

Smith Bay to Long Point Harbour

There is nothing like the dawning of a new day, especially as first seen when emerging from the cabin of a sailboat moored far from shore and far from the mundane responsibilities of regular life. No wind yet but it sure looked pretty. Burton stumbled out, quickly boarded *Pooh*, and skillfully rowed her toward pressing matters ashore. He returned soon after, scowling, and began scrubbing his hands and feet using biodegradable soap. In his haste to make waste he had stepped bare-footed on a very large, decomposing bird carcass. Such is the grand stuff of cruising memories! A breakfast of porridge, banana, and fresh-brewed coffee set a positive tone for what was going to be a spectacular day of sailing and discovery.

Anchor weighed with rode neatly stowed, we motored quietly out of Smith Bay, studiously avoiding the temptation to act out a variety of payback options which came to our minds while passing the now quiet cottages. After we rounded up abeam of Morrison Point on a heading for South Bay, "cat's paws" began to appear on the water, as these merged together into a rippled surface, indicating a light, shore breeze, Burton ecstatically ordered the raising of the main and genoa. This marked the second magic moment of the day.

There is nothing like the experience of raising sail, though shipmates experience it time and again. To the wonder of the fresh morning scenery was now added a wondrous transformation aboard. One moment the hull seemed heavy, moving sluggishly through the water, and the sounds of nature were drowned by the motor's drone. The next moment, when sails soared aloft and the motor died, a sudden silence prevailed, punctuated only by the soft rustling of sails and watery whispers. The hull accelerated and drew more firmly into the water.

Full Circle and her boys were now truly underway. Soon after, the quiet beauty at the mouth of Black Creek was seen to starboard. As we sailed past this inconspicuous spot it was hard to imagine that many years before large sailing ships had been built right there at Cooper's Dock, and that not far up the creek Milford and Port Milford had been bustling centers of trade.

A light breeze inched *Full Circle* past majestic McMahon Bluff and into South Bay, where a cluster of small homes and docks ap-

peared on the north shore. Concerned about depth and possible uncharted hazards, we struck the sails and started the motor. Gently idling toward the head of the bay with the weedy bottom clearly visible, we spied a church steeple and soon after a high steel dome. This looked like the top portion of an old lighthouse rearing up through the tree-tops. Why would a lighthouse be located in such a place?

To find out we anchored well out and, fitting our two hefty frames into *Pooh*, we made a top-heavy trip to shore. Arriving at a grassy spot we secured the dinghy to a rock, leaving her hidden in the tall grass, and scrambled up to the top of the bank where we found a wide swath cut through a small field of hay as if it were a passageway. Following this brought us to a church beside a park-like area, in the center of which stood a full scale lighthouse. An adjacent building held the Mariner's Park Museum.

Entering, we were drawn into a charming representation of the nautical history of Prince Edward County. We learned that the lighthouse had originally stood on False Duck (or Drake) Island. It was first lit in 1828 and extinguished by government decree in 1965. A year later it was reconstructed in this park to honour the many local farmer-seamen who braved the dangerous waters in this area, reputed years ago to be the shipwreck capital of the Great Lakes, with over 200 ships lost.

We returned to *Full Circle* over one hour later, Burton rowing *Pooh* and John taking the safer option of swimming out in spite of the cold water. Once back aboard we felt humbled by the museum's collection of pictures and models of great old ships and the captions that described the early sailors' heroic service and seamanship. Anchor weighed, we elected to hoist sail and run out past Platt Point. The steady southwest breeze held all afternoon, carrying us on a spectacular quarter reach far out to the tip of Long Point.

After rounding Point Traverse we made a short beat along the eastern face of the point to reach the small harbour. Over the past few hours we had felt transported back through time, not only because of the museum visit, but also because of the solitude of the unspoiled shoreline along which we were sailing. Suddenly we were rudely thrust into the 21st century as we drew close to Long Point Beach. Radios blared from pickup trucks ashore and the cigarette-lipped operator of a PWC was buzzing about, one moment ahead, astern, then abeam.

Several minutes later the red KL4 buoy marking the way into Long Point Harbour hove in sight. With John spotting at the bow, Burton gently eased *Full Circle's* 3½' draft and 8' beam into the seemingly impossible narrow cut through the sandy beach, entering the small bay. We prepared to anchor in the middle of the bay, the government dock being fully occupied by commercial vessels. Thankfully, a rafting-up opportunity was offered by Wayne, owner of *Duck's Dive*. His huge steel trawler is used to transport recreational divers and their gear out into Lake Ontario, where they explore the many shipwrecks in the area.

That evening we went for a stroll around the small harbour, past the quaint homes of a few commercial fishermen still operating in the area. Beyond the small enclave we arrived at a small point and came upon a shingle beach guarded by a defunct clapboard lighthouse, where out on the lake we witnessed

the glorious reflections of a red sunset on the now mirror-calm waters. Returning, we saw in the shallow water at the head of the bay the flashing back of a gargantuan fish writhing over something beneath, either in mortal combat or perhaps engaging in something more pleasant. In any event, like everything else on the cruise it was certainly more entertaining than watching television.

Later in the evening Wayne returned with our water containers full and we had a good gam over a few beers to cap the day. It was learned that the *Duck's Dive* headquarters at nearby Point Traverse are located in the original log house built in 1834 by Captain Walters. This man not only sailed tall ships but also farmed 300 acres and transported his cattle far out in the lake to pasture on Main Duck Island. The work ethic was certainly strong amongst those early settlers. Sleep came easily that night after this eventful leg of the cruise.

Long Point to Main Duck Island

Early morning ablutions and breakfast were rushed since Wayne was revving his huge Diesels and checking all systems prior to transporting a large group of sleepy-eyed young divers to a dive site. These arrived in small groups every couple of minutes, screeching to a halt at the end of the wharf in clouds of dust. Before casting off, Wayne indicated on his chart the heading which *Full Circle* should take to avoid hazards leaving the harbour and out between Timber and False Ducks Islands. There is nothing so valuable as local knowledge.

Resolving to return next year to this anchorage, we sailed *Full Circle* in Wayne's wake out to the northeast tip of False Ducks Island. Burton then took an electronic fix and disappeared below to plot a course to Main Duck Island, our next destination. Having little experience in blue water sailing we decided to navigate using both the ship's compass and John's hand-held magnetic compass rather than relying on a GPS waypoint. Steering by compass would now be feasible since *Full Circle* would soon be clear of the magnetic anomalies found within Prince Edward Bay.

Favoured by a reliable southwest breeze, *Full Circle* carried us safely along the 12 nautical mile course. It being a hazy day, in a very short time the large silhouette of Timber Island was reduced to a smudge on the horizon astern and we stared nervously ahead at the vast lake before us. After a quarter reach of less than three hours Main Duck Island emerged fully formed through the haze. This landfall was far different from that which we had experienced the previous year in John's Drascombe Lugger *Gail O' Wind*. In that instance the visibility had been very good. The island had presented itself in tiny blips on the distant horizon. These had grown together gradually into treetops, light tower, and finally discernible buildings and cliffs. But, hey, any safe landfall is significant! It brings a mixture of feelings including excitement, relief, and pride in the navigational accomplishment, tempered by humility before the forces controlling wind and sea.

Soon *Full Circle* drew abeam the well-marked range into School House Bay on the north face of the island. Sails were struck and furled. We then motored cautiously through the channel and deep into the narrow harbour, passing two American cabin cruisers moored at the small dock. Midway between the two shores, one clad with trees and shrubs, the

other curtained by tall reeds, the hook was set. Brimming with the feelings which all novices experience after completing a blue water passage, however short, and delighted by the discovery of such an idyllic anchorage, we sat still for a moment, quietly listening to the symphony of surf, gulls, and frogs.

After lunch we struck out on a hike westward across the island. Fortunately we had decided to wear long pants as we encountered many areas of dense poison ivy. Making our way inland from the south facing strip of boulder strewn beach, we wove through some dense brush, finally emerging into an open field. We surmised that this must have been where the early settlers had pastured their cattle. Being energetic hikers, we soon caught up with a party of three Americans from one of the cabin cruisers in the harbour, all attired in swim suits, bearing gifts of exposed legs to the poison ivy festooning the edges of the foot path. After a brief exchange of salutations we marched on, contemplating the next few days' prospects for those ill-fated legs.

Reaching the far side of the island, we explored a large abandoned cottage, took photographs of the lighthouse at the northwest corner, and pondered whether a large, overgrown, pool-like area surrounded by a low cement wall might have been the site of a fish hatchery reportedly built somewhere on the island over a century ago. Later in the afternoon we explored the northeast corner of the island searching for the gravesites and buried gold mentioned in historical accounts of shipwrecked French soldiers and sailors who supposedly perished here over two centuries ago. We also looked for the remains of a schoolhouse built to educate the children of the few families who tended the cattle on the island throughout the winter.

A short hike away we stood on a high bluff looking out at the vast lake and thinking about anecdotal accounts of the lonely settlers at Christmas time trying to stay in touch with loved ones on the mainland by floating letters in sealed bottles across to the shore of Amherst Island whenever winds were favourable. A little prior reading, fueled by our vivid imaginations, had elevated a simple hike into something far more memorable. Once again, sleep came easily as *Full Circle* lay quietly at anchor.

Main Duck Island to Kingston

John was torn from a deep slumber by the sound of thundering surf and Burton's awed voice asking, "do you hear that?" We were comforted somewhat by the VHF weather report, which stated that the wind was 15kts from the southwest, the temperature would be high, and there was no impending change in the weather. Still, we knew that such a "moderate breeze" (as described in the Beaufort scale) blowing over the long fetch of the lake throughout the night's duration, plus the day ahead, would produce white-capped waves considerably higher than one meter.

Moving stiffly, as is the manner of anxious people, we stowed our bedding, conducted hasty ablutions, and, with dry mouths, downed a hasty breakfast. A course of "true north" was set from close aboard the green MS1 buoy at the mouth of the channel to a point just west of the flashing green K9 buoy at the entrance of the Lower Gap, thus keeping us well off Melville Shoal. This leg would give us about 15 nautical miles of blue water sailing. In spite of the slight haze that morning we believed that later in the day it would be possible to con the remaining seven nau-

tical miles to reach Kingston. After a quick visit to the disgusting toilet building near the dock we started the outboard and the anchor was weighed.

Burton steered through the channel and John made ready to unfurl the genoa while within the relative calm of the island's lee effect. Very soon after, under sail, *Full Circle* heeled and buried her hull more firmly. She was now taking the full force of the "moderate breeze" on her port quarter, rolling and swaying from side to side in the waves as she went. Being a rather tepidly intrepid pair of sailors, now having emerged from the moderating influence of the island, we became conscious of having passed the point of no return and charged along with the waves toward Kingston. John's helming was still in the exacting mode of trying to hold the bow perfectly on course. It didn't take long for him to give up this struggle and steer more intuitively, guided by wind on cheek and the sun's sparkling reflection off the waves. Every half hour Burton took a GPS fix and popped below to plot their position on the chart. On the first occasion he suggested that John steer a touch more to port. Following this, he emerged smiling after each fix.

Looking out over the stern as the boat dropped into a trough, we noted the following seas seemed to swell above the horizon, *Pooh* on her 50' tether occasionally disappearing behind a watery hillock, and the odd wave emitting a very audible "whoosh" as it passed obliquely under the little sloop. About midway across we began to peer through the haze off the starboard beam trying to locate an expected image of the 65' light tower on Pigeon Island. Unfortunately, visibility was too obfuscated. However, we did see a ghostly shape in the distance which eventually materialized into an acutely heeled sloop pounding along on a close reach.

As time passed the wind lessened and we began to feel more confident. It was hot in the exposed cockpit and so we stripped and took turns lowering ourselves from the swimming ladder astern, dragging in the cool of the wake. The miles passed quickly with two scholarly gentlemen discussing all manner of lofty subjects with nought but wind and waves to hear the brilliant pronouncements. Finally, what great relief and joy we felt when Amherst Island emerged from the haze. Another landfall for our treasure chest of cruising memories.

The Lower Gap was safely coned and with ever darkening sky *Full Circle* was headed toward Kingston. When the wind began to freshen, Burton wanted to take one more exciting tack so off we flew, crashing toward Four Mile Point on Simcoe Island. Returning, we spied the brig *St Lawrence II*. Like a pair of bloodhounds we decided to give chase. However, it soon became apparent that our small craft was no match for this majestic adversary. Turning back toward Kingston we began a roller-coaster down-wind ride over Penitentiary Shoal.

As we flew eastward toward the harbour entrance several dinghies from a sailing school fleet blew over in succession. Time to start the motor and round up to take sails down. By now there was a chill in the air, the wind was screaming, the sky was very dark, and the steep, white-capped waves were charging along in close order. Failing to swing around to port, *Full Circle* wallowed back downwind and finally managed to swing up to starboard into the wind. This enabled Burton to drop and

furl the sails. It was a real struggle with the old Merc coughing and the boat bucking like a bronco in the vicious chop. John, thankfully, steered toward Flora McDonald Basin and Burton called on Channel 68 to request directions to a mooring.

After tying up we decided to go jogging through the downtown core, combining sightseeing with much needed exercise. We became very hot during the late afternoon climb up the steep hill that rises northward from the basin. As we coasted back downhill we began to anticipate the relief of showering and washing a three-day pile of dirty laundry. A few minutes later, staggering into the damp and dark wash facilities, arms laden with dirty laundry and fingers grasping soap and coins, we were met by the angry faces of women from other boats. They had just been informed that there was no water but that a plumber had been called and water would be available "in one hour without fail."

Ever optimistic, we stuffed our smelly things into one of the machines and made for the nearest pub where we might pass the time more pleasantly. One hour later we returned to learn that repairs would take yet another hour. John went "ballistic," demanding to speak with the "top guy." The suave gentleman in charge quickly materialized, promising repairs "within the hour."

Back to the pub. Later, with a distinct spring and swagger in our step, we returned to find that our laundry had been removed from "our" machine. Pointedly questioning the busy women surrounding us we were given, in no uncertain terms, the simple cut-throat etiquette which prevails in marina laundromats. Finally a machine became available and we chastened adventurers gave ourselves up to the wonderfully rejuvenating showers. Later, with dryers fully occupied, we draped wet laundry all over *Full Circle*. Hunger struck and we quickly returned to town for fish and chips and more ale. Much later that evening, with a little stagger in our swagger, we returned to *Full Circle*, still in her full regalia of damp laundry, to sleep off the day's exertions.

Return to Prescott

The next morning we were a groggy ship's company setting off from Kingston to bring the old girl back to her berth in Prescott. Having had to motor all the way up from Prescott initially, we were determined to return under sail with notions of being pushed by the brisk southwesterly that normally blows in this area. As it turned out, it was a merciless sun that prevailed with a very light westerly to slowly push us downriver, sails spread wing-and-wing, toward our destination. This manner of proceeding required a great deal of concentration from the helmsman to keep the sails full and it was John who was to be primary bondsman to the tyrant tiller during this leg of the journey.

The weather conditions did not diminish our boyish excitement about passing Point Frederick within range of the battery of cannon bristling out from historic Fort Henry. Nor did the humidity dampen the feelings of awe which we experienced after threading our way between Wolfe and Howe Islands and ghosting out to the brimming expanse of the upper St Lawrence River with ten nautical miles of open water flooding eastward toward Grindstone Island. Just think, three centuries ago Indians involved in fur trade and fishing paddled their birchbark canoes from

the interior of our continent to continue down the same water highway, known to them as "Garden Place of the Great Spirit." Unfortunately this "Thousand Island" garden soon became overgrown with traders' York boats, timber rafts each covering several acres, and later large steam boats with clanging bells and deafening horns. We were soon to learn what else the modern world has brought to these once peaceful waterways.

As the morning progressed and the sun intensified, the heat became almost unbearable in that exposed cockpit, and with no relative wind to refresh us we slowly baked as she ambled toward home. Thus, we decided to put in to Gananoque for a hamburger and some ice cream at lunchtime. As we left the expanse between Wolfe and Howe Islands and entered the narrow channel toward Gananoque, we began encountering heavy boat traffic with the usual confusion of wakes from the many powerboats frequenting the area.

On reaching the town we tied up at the public dock by the Customs reporting station which faces the open river. Burton left John with the boat and made his way to a nearby restaurant to fetch lunch. As Burton waited at the counter for his order to be prepared he casually glanced out the window overlooking the waterfront. To his horror he beheld *Full Circle* bobbing furiously and bashing into the concrete wall of the dock, John doing all he could to keep her from leaping out of the water (a rather unlikely contest between a 160lb man and a 3,000lb boat)! Burton tore out of the restaurant, determined to save his beloved from dashing herself to pieces, reaching her in time to witness the last two thuds of her port bow into the concrete wall as the waves began to subside.

John explained that two large powerboats had emerged from a nearby marina at full throttle, trailing huge wakes as they passed close to the waterfront docking area. We were later informed by a local that such incidents are very common on the Gananoque waterfront where visiting boats are frequently pounded against the concrete wall because of the wakes from passing powerboats. Those who know better usually opt to tie up at the marina located within the breakwater at the western edge of town. Fortunately, no one was injured and *Full Circle* did not suffer serious damage.

Setting off again toward Prescott we entered the Gananoque Narrows, a narrow buoyed channel from which deep draft vessels such as keelboats must not stray. Here we encountered a large tour boat heading into Gananoque at full speed, making a huge wake. With little room to maneuver, *Full Circle* was forced to take the steep wake on her beam, causing her to roll violently, her mast whipping from side to side, severely straining the rigging and nearly swamping the cockpit. Throughout the remainder of our journey in the Thousand Islands we encountered heavy powerboat traffic with *Full Circle* dancing wildly when caught in the confused seas heaved up by numerous converging wakes. During this time we lived in constant dread of rapidly approaching powerboats whose operators, often seemingly unaware of the rules of the road and the dictates of courtesy, would come screaming toward us with their roaring engines, in many cases refusing to yield to a boat under sail until the last possible moment (if at all, in several encounters we were forced to yield to the oncoming powerboats). Sun-baked and weary from the onslaught, we

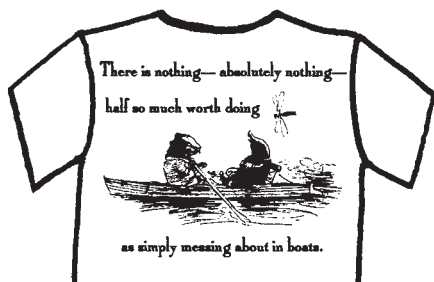
reflected upon the irony of having braved the howling winds and swells of Lake Ontario, and yet experiencing our most unnerving moments in the protected waters of the scenic Thousand Islands.

That evening we made for a quiet anchorage off a small island located about midway in the channel running along the north side of Grenadier Island. After we had set the hook and begun preparations for dinner, a local cottager motored by in his skiff, giving a friendly wave, which we took as the kindest gesture in a nerve-wracking day, setting all to rights again.

The next morning gave us a bright sunrise with the promise of another hot day. Again a gentle breeze pushed us eastward at a slow pace designed to make us roast more effectively in the cockpit. By mid-morning John's tiller hand was blistering from the sun and we alternated for brief stints at the helm, seeking relief by draping a towel over head and shoulders and wrapping another round the exposed hand. We looked with envy at the larger sailboats encountered along the way sporting dodgers and biminis offering their occupants shady respite from the sun. From time to time we would take turns trailing from the stern ladder in the cooling waters.

While we were transiting the Brockville Narrows a man on a personal watercraft buzzed around us for a while and then cut across our stern, inches from our dinghy tow. We finally passed to the east of Brockville, gratefully leaving the noisy, traffic-burdened Thousand Islands behind us, and entered the wide, less heavily trafficked final stretch of river to Prescott. By mid-afternoon we arrived safely, entering Prescott Harbour with almost 250 nautical miles under our keel. She had come full circle.

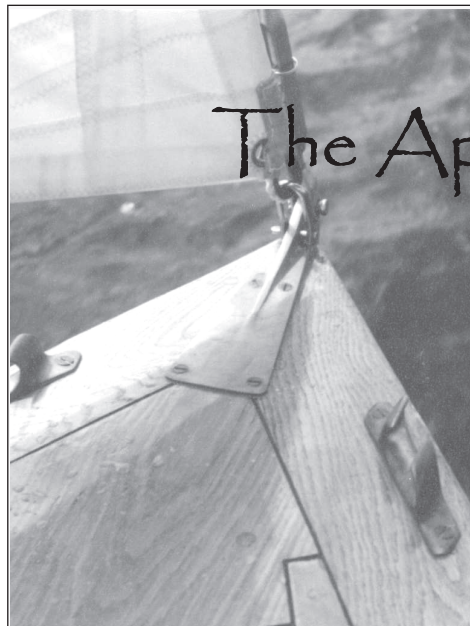
Perhaps our adventure seems trivial when contrasted with reports about worldwide circumnavigations, but our experience suggests that enjoyment from cruising may depend less on how far one goes than it does on how far you allow yourself to let go, to look beyond unpleasant realities and re-experience child-like feelings of wonderment and enthusiasm for what the water world offers.



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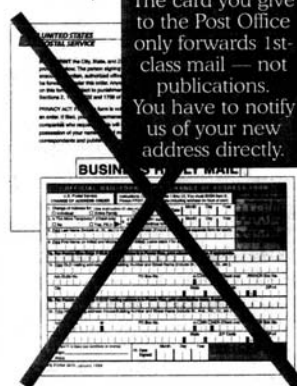
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Aboard

At one time, some 40 years ago, we lived aboard our 26' cutter, the *Tanoa*, at the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor in Honolulu. We never verified it but heard that *Tanoa* in Polynesian means "bowl," and we discovered in our numerous outings that it indeed sailed like one. But with its beam, center cockpit, and after cabin it was quite commodious for our little family with all of its 26 feet.

We lived aboard for two reasons, one because we enjoyed sailing and the ocean, but also as a rent control technique. Even in the '60s housing costs ashore in Hawaii were quite high. After bouncing from low rent to lower rent apartments we took the plunge, bought the boat, and moved aboard. We enjoyed being aboard in the marina atmosphere and took occasional day sails straight out and back and a few overnights, although there wasn't much gunkholing opportunity on the Honolulu side of Oahu.

During our stay mother came to visit, and visit. She was going to return soon, but sooner became later and she stayed ashore in a nearby apartment/hotel as there was not that much room, except in the cockpit, on our "yacht." During mother's extended stay we thought it might be a good adventure, and an enjoyable outing, to pop over to Kauai to explore a different island than Oahu. This being agreed to by all parties, myself, wife Judy, and mother Letitia, we resolved to do so and set a date a few weeks hence. We parked our infant daughter Audrey ashore with some friends who were glad to have her, and upon borrowing a wooden pram dinghy from a neighbor, we were ready to go.

Leeward Point

When the day came we went, sailing merrily downwind, around Barber's Point and tacking northeast along the lee of Oahu with a significant breeze off the mountains but flat water near shore. It was exhilarating and comfortable sailing, an auspicious start for our adventure. We timed our outing for an overnight passage of the Kauai channel and it was nearing sunset when we reached Ka'ena Point. Still calm and blissful, mother decided to go below to make some cheese sandwiches and soup. During her preparations we cleared Ka'ena Point and fell off to the west toward Nawiliwili Bay. The point is quite pointed and being close to shore we were one moment in calm, flat water and a moment later in the middle of the Pacific with a 2,000-mile fetch and seas accordingly. These are the famous waves that slopped up east of us at Waimea and Sunset beach, the surfing capital of the world.

Slow Down

Our environment changed quickly and dramatically. Now we were chugging up and surfing down 15' combers with breaking seas all around. Mother didn't like it and neither did our dinghy. Mother expressed her concern, while below heating the soup, by yelling up the companionway to "slow down!" Not being able to ignore her completely, I explained that that was not an alternative and anyway I was busy with the dinghy shortening the scope and reefing the sail. I doused the jib and, in the dark, put a reef in the sail. Neither of these maneuvers made a difference to our speed or the motion of the boat as this was more controlled by wave and wind action on the beamy, high freeboard. But we were stable, if erratic, rolling to Kauai.

Sailing with Mother

By George Haecker



Lost Dinghy

In the meantime the dinghy, not liking its environment, began to take on water and wallow deeper and deeper. I continued to shorten the scope but realized, as it was being flooded, there was no way I could lift it aboard, empty it, and secure it. So, hoping for the best, I snugged it as tight as I could and looked forward rather than astern. The dinghy would have none of it and a short while later it was nowhere to be seen. It was either coming along as a submarine or decided to go to Japan.

No matter, nothing could be done about it so now we were barreling across the Kauai channel with no lifeboat nor dinghy but with a high probability of some life preservers below somewhere. Did I mention I was younger then and, if not foolish, a bit naive about safety afloat, back-up systems, radios, harnesses, survival gear, supplies, and a lifeboat? After all, we were just on a short jaunt from one tropical island to another, the locals had done it the same, similarly non-equipped, for a thousand years.

Compass Trouble

The night got darker and rougher but our compass steered us on what was surely a straight path to Nawiliwili, that is, until a wave knocked it off its perch and it lit with a disconcerting whack on the cockpit floor. It didn't seem to be broken and I was able to reposition it and tie it in with some line. This was before duct tape and bungee cords. Seemingly it was OK and on course, there was no binnacle light but I had a flashlight. We rolled on through the night toward Kauai with Judy at the wheel, mother below, and myself over the lee rail reinvesting mother's soup and sandwich in the ocean.

Lost

Morning arrived with the same wind and sea conditions and a shrouded sun behind us. The problem was that ahead of us, where Kauai should have been, there was

nothing. The ocean melded into the sky with a luminous haze and no land was in sight. By dead reckoning (the only navigation system aboard with no GPS, loran, or sextant) we should have been about five miles off. And Kauai, some 30 miles wide and a quarter of a mile high, should have been right in our face and highly visible.

My thoughts turned to the fallen compass and a wildly swinging course during the night, with fear that we might have missed the island entirely and were on our way to Japan, ahead of the dinghy. Being ill supplied for such a distance, I kept my mouth shut while mother, now adjusted to the waves and wind, sat calmly in the cockpit enjoying the sail. I shuddered to think of alternatives, of which there was only one, and that was to turn around and beat our way back to Oahu, if we could find it, keeping in mind that *Tanoa* much preferred to go downwind rather than to windward.

As these moments continued and anxiety increased I began to see a slight smudge on the horizon. Not realizing what it might be, it certainly wasn't a full blown, legitimate island. I gaped in controlled optimism that something was up. As I continued to stare and mother continued to chat about the upcoming island visit, the smudge widened. The morning haze, which was optically invisible, was slowly burning off and, as if a giant hand was raising a giant curtain, the line of obscurity moved higher unveiling the full and beautiful profile of Kauai, with us right on target to the Nawiliwili entry just a few miles away.

Relief is a wonderful thing and with it came renewed confidence in our seafaring and navigational skills. With joy we sailed proudly into the harbor and smartly anchored under sail, only then to recall that we had neither dinghy nor radio to call for one. But after we did a bit of clean up and organizing, a dinghy came by close enough to hail and give me a ride shore side where I managed to procure a loaner.

On the Hook

By today's standards the *Tanoa* was ill equipped for living at anchor with nothing for comfort except an ice box and alcohol stove. But that was sufficient to sustain us and we happily commuted to the grocery store to get supplies to set up our onboard living. But this environment, in an area of about 150sf, can feel a bit over populated and confining. And although mother was probably one of the world's best sports, it wasn't too long before she decided to move ashore for the duration of our visit. She found a nearby room and, as gregarious as she was, soon made acquaintance with the proprietress, Sophie, with whom she became a lifelong friend.

Return to Windward

We had no radio to check the weather and, other than rumors around the harbor, had no way to know what was going on out there. One powerboat I visited said they were waiting for a calmer window to pop down to Paapeete. This seemed to be an over-adventure-some undertaking in a 40' powerboat and I had no idea if they were serious or actually made the trip. But weather in Hawaii is generally irrelevant as it is all the same, so when it came time to go, we went again.

As we motored out of Nawiliwili on our southeastern course we soon re-encountered the middle of the Pacific Ocean, this time in our face, and I relearned the lesson of how

some boats sail more easily downwind than to windward. Poor *Tanoa* banged to windward through a 170° arc and Kauai never seemed to get smaller. As this went on one day turned into another and, besides missing an island, I learned anxiety of another sort. At this rate we would spend the better part of a month getting back to Oahu with little to enjoy in the way of food or drink and no way to tell our babysitters that we were, against some odds, still alive. Finally I cranked up the engine and was able to motorsail on a slightly more practical course toward our goal. Eventually, after some three days we worked our way into the lee of Oahu and were crabbing south toward Barber's Point.

Out of Oil

As we got some ten miles out the engine began to make distressful sounds. I wasn't able to contact Click and Clack but, in checking the oil, discovered there wasn't any and in checking our supply of oil, discovered there wasn't any. However, I did scrounge up a quart, enough to limp the engine along and very slowly put-putted into the little harbor at Pokai Bay.

This then necessitated a hitchhiking program down the highway to a distant fill-

ing station where I was able to call our babysitters, report our good health, apologize for our negligent parenting, and buy an armful of oil. Back aboard with the engine re-oiled we motorsailed down to Barber's Point and around toward Waikiki. In clearing Barber's Point, with our lack of windward ability even while motorsailing, we could barely make headway toward shore and pretty much repeated our maneuvers off of Kauai, sailing legs back and forth with hardly a foot gained to windward.

Signaling

Another day with this procedure and no radio, I succumbed to the humiliation of humiliations and flagged down the nearest Navy destroyer with Judy's red parka, the closest thing we had to a VHF, and watched as the behemoth slowly circled back to us. I'm sure they tried their best to inquire as to our distress on their radio and were puzzled by lack of response, so the Morse code started flashing. This left me in befuddlement as I didn't know the language and all I could do was yell my loudest as they got closer. Finally we were within hailing distance and I sheepishly explained our predicament, that we couldn't get to where we were going in any practical

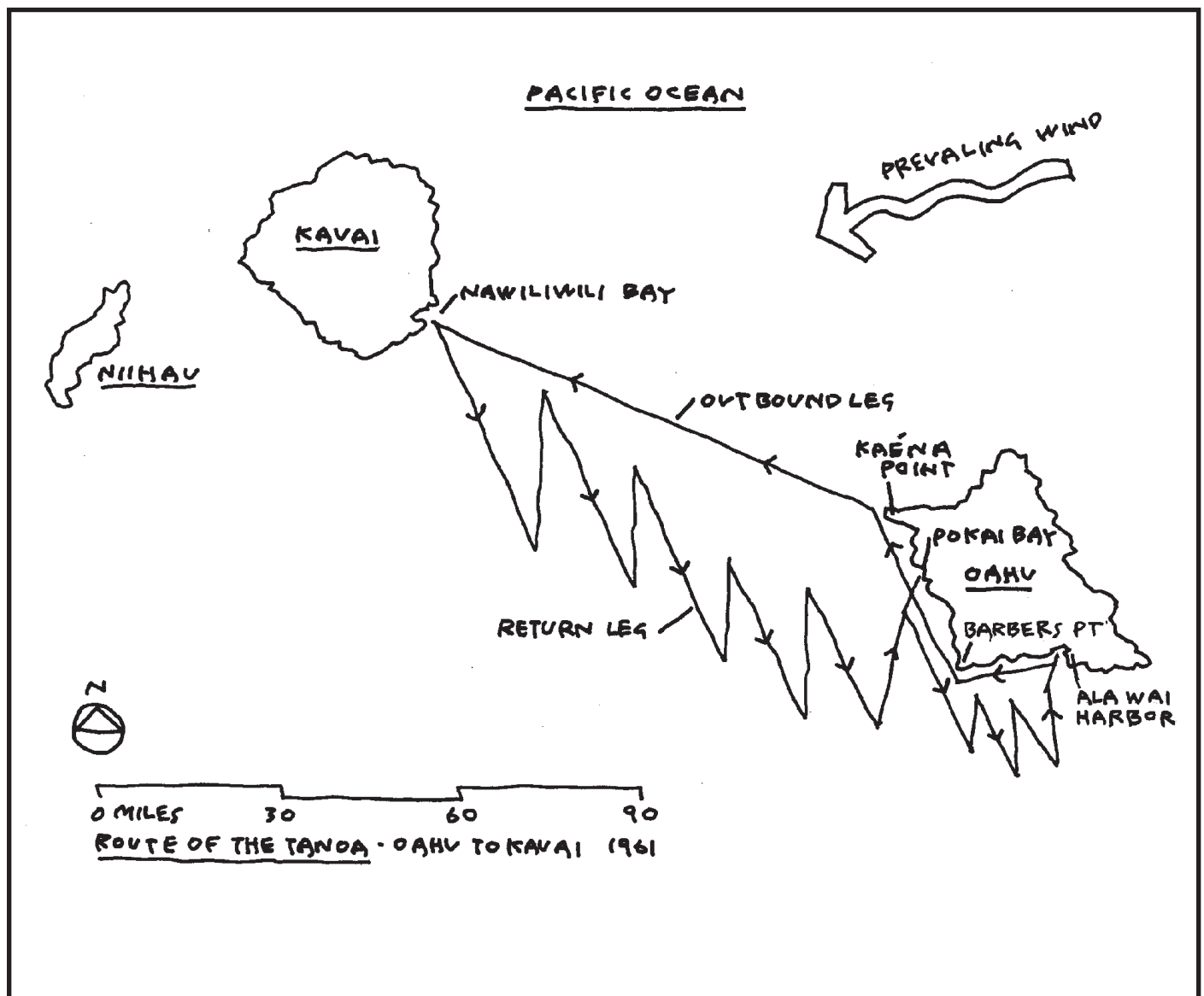
time period and by now, many days overdue, had some urgency to get back to home port. Rather than torpedoing us on the spot, they kindly said they would call the Coast Guard, and steamed away.

Towed

In due course the Coasties arrived and, although we were not in life threatening distress, decided they would salvage us themselves without calling for the thousand dollar per hour tugs from Pearl Harbor. They towed us into the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor and slipped us into our slip with only gentle admonishment that we might be a little better prepared next time. Mother went ashore promptly and within days booked herself back to the mainland, exclaiming what a wonderful trip she had and was looking forward to corresponding with her new friend on Kauai.

Wrecked

When we moved from Hawaii a few months later we sold the *Tanoa* to a Mr Heck-enlively who, we understood, had nine children and wrecked it shortly thereafter, somewhere near Barber's Point.



When one of my best friends, Nelson Bennett, called me about joining him on a week-long sailing trip out of Apalachicola in his Sea Pearl 21, I was delighted to accept. That was April of 2003 and gave me my first experience in packing up and sleeping on a sailboat. Since that time we have done three other trips, three days down the Tennessee River from Watts Bar to Chattanooga, another on Gunter'sville Lake, and last June on the Little Tennessee River from Chilhowee Dam to the Tellico Harbor Marina in Tellico Lake in Vonore, Tennessee. Vonore is about 85 miles northeast of my home in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

As Nelson is now building another boat, he has sold the Sea Pearl to me. It is a 1983 model with the lower floor, providing more space for storage and the possibility of sleeping space for two adults. It is rigged with the original lugsails, wooden masts and spars, and all the original equipment. My compliments to the folks at Marine Concepts for building things to last. I own no motor, just a set of 9' oars to move us along when there is no wind. I love the simplicity of the boat, the quietness and odorless experience.

On Friday, June 8, 2007, Nelson arrived at my house with his pick-up truck to take us to our destination for a four-day sailing trip down the Little T, short for Little Tennessee River. I had purchased a map, #1728, from Kingfisher Map Company. We stopped at WalMart to shop for food and spent around \$50 for all we needed for the our trip. For water, I filled nine Nalgene one-liter bottles and one 1gal plastic jug. The Nalgene's store well in all sorts of little spaces. We both are minimalist from our many times canoeing the Boundary Waters Canoe Area together, so storage space in the Sea Pearl seemed like a luxury to us.

All of our food stored in one plastic lid container, which slides under the cockpit, and a matching container holds all pots, pans, utensils, plates, etc. On the other side, under the cockpit, two High-Back Go Anywhere Chairs stow perfectly one on top of the other. I cannot say enough good things about these chairs that double as sleeping pads as they are 47" long and adjust to lay out flat. For a Sea Pearl owner these are a great find. They can be purchased from West Marine.

I had pre-arranged for shuttle service with Tellico Harbor Marina. Because we were arriving on a Friday afternoon in busy season, he said maybe an employee at the marina restaurant could help us if we arrived

Sailing on the Little Tennessee River

By Ernie Brown



Nelson sailing.

between 2-3pm, their slow time. And sure enough, Wanda the cook gladly rode the 15 miles up in our rig and drove it back to the marina where the charge was \$5 per day for parking.

We put in around 4pm, the wind was howling and a storm was brewing. After a one-hour sail we were looking for a safe harbor and found it in a narrow strip of water between an island and the mainland. We put out our Danforth anchor, with 4.5' of chain at the end, raised the cabin canvas top, and hunkered down for the next hour of high winds, strong rain, thunder, and lightning. We were safe and dry and we ate tomorrow's lunch that required no cooking, apples, carrots, nuts, Flat Out Wrap bread, crackers, and cookies. After a photo of a beautiful post storm sunset we bedded down for the night.

The next morning I fired up our trusty Glomate stove and boiled water for coffee and real oatmeal, so much better than instant, especially when adorned with raisins, pecans, butter, salt, and sugar. After breakfast and some devotional time we broke out the fishing rod. The nice thing about the Sea Pearl

design is that one man can row while another can fish. I have found that standing in front

of the mainmast and leaning back on it is very stable for a fisherman, sails down, of course. Casting a 2" orange Repala produced a nice red eye bass and a large mouth bass, plenty of food for the two of us.

After an hour or so of fishing we raised the sails and were on our way. It was so pleasant with a 5mph wind that I decided to cook lunch while underway. I filleted the fish, cut up fresh potatoes, green pepper, onion, and carrots for stir fry in olive oil. I added battered fish fillets and it all came out hot and ready at the same time. I learned from experience that cooking on the side deck is safer than on the portable rowing seat in the middle, having scalded my feet on past trips.

After several hours of tacking against a light wind we found a cove on the left for the night, around mile 25. We anchored, took a swim, and bathed. All refreshed, it was time to cook again, this time we added Armour canned ham to the stir fry veggies and that did the trick. We slept under the stars tonight with no need for coverage and the bugs just were not that bad. A curious thing I have discovered after many nights sleeping in the Sea Pearl, the deck and all on it will be wet with dew the next morning, yet all in the open cabin will be dry, maybe the body warmth prevents the condensation, who knows, but it is nice.

After a good breakfast we were off fishing again, but no luck today. We raised the sails and enjoyed a great day with plenty of wind 10-15mph. We stopped for lunch and raised the shade rig Nelson had made, swam again and bathed, and started looking for our last evening's anchorage. Just to the left of Fort Loudon, a restored mid-1700s British fort, we found a beautiful spot. The view of the mountains of the Cherokee National Forest was before us, a range that we had been enjoying for three days. Since Nelson and I had both visited Fort Loudon in the past, we did not do it this time. But for first timers it is a must and there are docks on the north side of the peninsula where it sits. After a good dinner, some reading out loud to each other from the book, *Call of the Ancient Mariner* by Reece Polly, and laughing a lot, we bedded down for the night, again under the stars.

Up at a daybreak next morning and after a short sail to the marina we found our rig in good order and headed home.

This was a great experience, as has been owning my Sea Pearl. I am 59 and Nelson is 71 and we are both transitioning from backpacking and canoeing to sailing. I am a grandfather with eight grandkids and most have had multiple overnights with me on my Sea Pearl. They can sail it because they can see in front of them without a permanent cabin blocking their view. The boat has truly been a blessing in my life and in the lives of my friends and relatives.

The shade rig.



Fort Loudon.



Although we had camped before, it had always been with the children and with a vehicle close by. This time it would be just my wife and I and we intended to try camping in the interior of Algonquin Park in Canada. We were tired of the noise and lack of privacy of drive-in campgrounds and ready for something new and different. I had just finished construction of a wooden kayak, kind of a cross between a decked canoe and open cockpit kayak. We figured that could take us and our gear to a quiet spot all our own. The old camper truck, a '72 Chevy half-ton pickup with a cap, carried the boat nicely on top and I could load and unload it myself. The truck would provide housing to and from the park. It was the end of September and we thought the fall color would still be good in the north, so we packed up and were off.

We arrived at the park with no reservations but with luck there was one spot available on Rock Lake. We could put the boat in at the drive-in campground and paddle to a remote site without even portaging. However, we would have to look around the lake for a spot to camp since we were reserved for an empty spot someplace on the lakeshore, not a specific site. We drove to the launch point, transferred our gear, and were quickly underway.

It was early in the day and the lake was relatively calm but the wind was beginning to pick up. We paddled the length of the west shore, rounded a point where the lake opened onto a long bay, and suddenly were in the teeth of strong wind and waves. The kayak had only the slightest V-bottom, hard-chined to nearly vertical sides. We did not ride over the waves, we rode with them, rocking violently. The western point of an island was not far away so we headed for it. Now close to the island shore, with the wind at our back, we felt a bit more secure.

We had not gone far when we came upon a campsite on the island, empty. "This is perfect," I remarked. The site had a soft, level mat of pine needles, an easy take-out spot, and a rocky point for sitting and relaxing. There was nothing else except the site marker on the tree and a box in the woods, but we had expected that. The day was warm and sunny. This would be great.

We set up our tent and prepared to enjoy our stay. Up to this time we had always camped with the children in our very large, heavy, bulky, cabin style tent. It would not do for this so I had purchased a small tent barely big enough for two. Although small and light, only at the front peak could a person even sit up in the thing and it was a real chore to enter and leave. Still, this little tent was sturdy and good protection from bugs, even though at that time of year there were none.

We were aware that in the north woods, especially in a relatively remote spot, precautions need to be taken against losing our food to critters, including bears, raccoons, and chipmunks. Right after lunch I strung a rope between two trees and hung our food pack at the center point. We could easily let it down when necessary at mealtime but, of course, we did not string it up quite soon enough for as we were finishing lunch we looked around and saw a chipmunk helping himself to our special loaf of fruit bread.

Another necessary precaution is not to trust the water source. We had brought a good water filter so felt safe using the lake water. Although I thought it might be overkill, we boiled the water as well. You cannot be too careful with the possibility of Giardia.

The Raccoon Episode

By Hugh Groth



The rest of the day was relaxing and uneventful, other than we thought we heard a dog barking somewhere on the island. Apparently there was another campsite on the other side. No more critters got into our food and we spent a peaceful night drifting off to sleep to the sounds of loons and owls. The next morning a loaded canoe with two people and a dog came around the end of the island. The site on the other side would be vacant that night, which was fine with us, although they had been no bother.

Later that morning my wife was enjoying the sun on our rocky point when a huge beaver hauled himself out of the water right next to her. He seemed to show no fear as he claimed the point and proceeded to paw through his handful of mud and weeds. The double precaution with the water was apparently a good idea after all.

We spent another wonderful sunny day and with light winds we paddled up into the inlet on the east side of the lake. It was late in the year and there just were not many people around. That evening the food pack was strung up in place as usual and we settled in for another peaceful night.

About midnight I awoke to a swish, then an interval and another swish, then another. Finally another strange sound made me sit up, hitting my head on the top of the tent. "I don't think it's a bear, but some kind of critter is in our camp," I mumbled, fumbling my way outside. There I found a raccoon swinging back and forth clinging tightly to the food pack. About 4-5' from the suspension rope was a stump about 6' high which I had not noticed earlier. Apparently the raccoon had climbed the stump and jumped toward the food pack, hitting it to start it swinging.

The swish sound was his claws raking the Nylon side. He then fell to the ground, climbed the stump again, and jumped at just


the right time, striking the pack again and increasing the swing. Finally, after several tries the pack had swung far enough that he could jump and hang on. Now he thought he would have a feast but I put a stop to that. I shoed him off into the woods, then tightened the suspension rope so that the pack was out of reach of a leap from the stump. That will take care of it," I said, and was soon happily zipped back into my sleeping bag.

Very soon there was more noise from the direction of the food pack. I was irritated but I got up and out again to find the raccoon once again clinging to the pack. I realized that since the suspension rope was now tighter, he had been able to tightrope across it to the pack. This time when I appeared he scurried back across the rope to the tree and sat there looking at me. What was I going to do now? It was too late to move the pack to a different location. Angrily, I grabbed the kayak paddle and jabbed the raccoon in the butt and he scurried up the tree. He sat up there in the tree grinning at me, his beady little eyes reflecting in the flashlight beam.

For the rest of the night it was climb out of the tent, grab the kayak paddle and poke the raccoon back up the tree, then climb back into the tent, over and over. This was a very resourceful and persistent raccoon but I was not going to let him beat me. It did not help that my wife found the whole thing hilarious. Finally he gave up and ambled off into the woods without getting our food. Apparently the dog had been our savior the night before. Well, at least now, in the early morning, I might get a little sleep.

It was not to be. Slightly before dawn some fool came paddling down the lake from the direction of the drive-in campground yelling, "Pizza man, pizza man," at the top of his lungs. I never found out who or why nor did I really want to know. He served to bring an unpleasant end to a pretty bad night. I was tired and out of sorts but we stayed a while anyway. Then, a bit short on bread, we paddled back to the truck as it began to cloud up. That night we stayed warm and dry inside the truck as it poured rain down on the metal cap. The continuing rain did not bother us greatly for the rest of our short Canadian odyssey and the leaves were beautiful in fall color. We resolved that we would try this again. The next summer I bought a nice tripping canoe and a better tent and devised a much better "bear rope." The lakes were beckoning.





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The canal forms a Y at Trenton. The right branch is the "Feeder" carrying the water from the Delaware River to supply the canal.

Brushes had a brother-in-law half a mile beyond Trenton who had been watching for the *Cowles* for a week. This relative had a garden filled with pease and late asparagus and a cook who could bake a ham with such exceptional toothsome-ness that Brushes insisted upon altering the course of the *Cowles* at once. In fact, the ham was baked and waiting.

"Won't take us half an hour," he urged, "canal skirts his melon bed." But Dusenberry objected. He didn't know nothin' about this "Feeder," guessed it didn't have no basins to turn around in. He wouldn't be responsible for the boat anyhow. If Mr Brushes wanted the tiller, it was his'n. In this dilemma Brushes interviewed a native who declared that two miles up, at a quarry, there was a basin where the *Cowles* could "go round a-humpin'." This being settled, the Patriarch stepped ashore and arranged for an extra team of mules and a towboy. The *Cowles* swung through the narrow bridge and the voyage of discovery and adventure began.

"How far is this ham?"

"One mile from the railroad bridge," replied Brushes. Just then Scraps came tumbling up the stairway armed with a sheet of Whatman paper and a palette. He took in the picturesque waterfront at a glance, flattened himself out on the deck, and began washing in some old rookeries on the opposite bank. A group surrounded him and the subject of the detour was soon forgotten. What difference did it make? One canal was as good as another! Let her go through to the end and, if there was no turning room, hitch the mules to the rudder post and come home backwards!

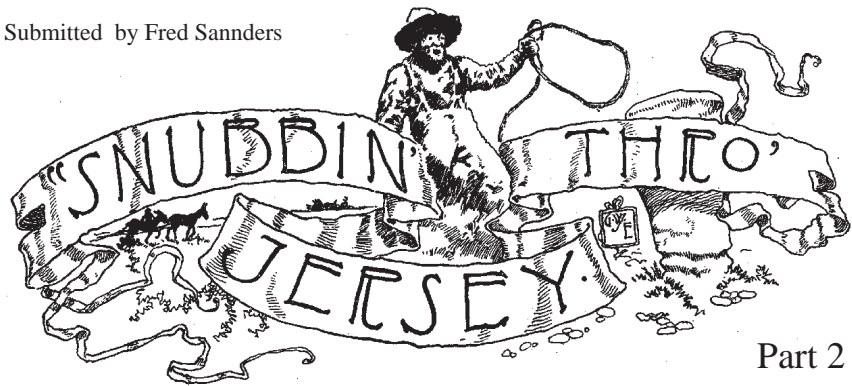
Be it said to the credit of Dusenberry that through the vicissitudes which followed this decision he stuck to his tiller manfully, that when the forward flagpole carried away the fire alarm telegraph wire and started half the bells in Trenton ringing two minutes thereafter, he still preserved an Egyptian gravity of countenance. Every foot of the canal was a aqua incognito to him. The gates were handled differently, the snubbing-posts were set farther apart, and the locks were much narrower and shorter. But after the first bridge was passed he prepared himself for the worst, although his mind was constantly filled with visions of the boat wedged between a swinging draw and the left bank with her upper deck awash while her keel quietly rested in the Jersey mud.

When the telegraph wire snapped he merely dodged its whirling end as it whipped past his head and said between his teeth to Martha, "This foolishness ain't goin' to last. They'll butt down a drawbridge next. Martha, any set of fellers who will git a man into a hole like this for a ham ought to be drowned," and then, in a lower voice, "and I guess they will."

Scraps worked away like mad, spattering his color around and smearing a whole tube of Chinese white on the clean deck in his hurry to catch a sky tint before the curve of the canal ruined his perspective. The Patriarch smoked away contentedly from amid the cushions under the awning and enjoyed the splendor of the setting sun and the ragged line of the potteries with their conical chimneys silhouetted against the brilliant sky. The Scribe, in a moment of enthusiasm, was booking the log.

From *The Century Magazine*, August 1887

Submitted by Fred Sannders



Part 2

The only uneasy man aboard was Brushes. He paced the deck continually, took soundings with his eye, and when the big laker barely scraped through a narrow drawbridge with half an inch to spare, he followed with quickened step the protecting fender down her whole length until the boat swung clear and the danger was passed. Finally he mounted the bow and swept the long canal with his glass. Low, rambling, old-fashioned houses with red roofs, modern high-peaked gables, moss covered, slanting, shingled tops, houses with trees, and houses bare as Sahara, houses of all kinds and periods. Melon patches in an advanced state of cultivation and gardens overrun with pease and belated asparagus galore.

All these and more rose to view as the perspective became distinct, passed in review, and were lost in the afternoon glow. The sturdy team, which had already done 22 miles, bent mulefully to their work and kept the towline taut as a fiddlestring, and yet no sign of the brother-in-law's. Then it was that Moses, ever patient, with providing watchfulness peered up the hatch, sidled up to the bow watch, and said, "Did I understand you to say they was to be a baked ham for dinner?" Brushes fixed his eye on him for a moment, restrained an imprecation, and watched a red roof with high chimneys evolve itself from amid a grove of chestnuts. In another moment an uncertain pathway wandered out from a row of white palings, turned down to the water's edge and sprawled itself over a small wooden dock on the extreme end of which sat a solitary ducky fishing. "Is dat you, Mass' Brushes? The boss been waitin' for you a week."

"Yes, who are you?"

"Jim."

"Where's your master?"

"Tuck sick and gone Saratogy wiff de chillen."

"Who's at home?"

"Ain't nobody at home, sir! House locked up and de key ober to de drugstore."

Brushes shut his glass, walked to the hatch, and said in a voice like a commodore, "Moses!"

"Yesser," came rumbling up the reply, followed instantly by that ducky.

"You needn't wait dinner for that ham."

The towline slackened and wavered. Dusenberry went forward, passed a snubbing-rope to the tow-boy who slipped the noose over a stump. Dusenberry gradually paid out the rope as it tightened around a cleat. The wet hawser held fast and the *Cowles* rested.

The red-headed tow-boy clambered up and over the bow and approached the group,

hat in hand. "Do any of you gents know where you are goin'?"

"Certainly, going to turn around."

"Where?"

The silence that followed was painful. Certainly not here in a canal half her length? Where then? Perhaps higher up. Perhaps at the next bridge but nobody had any positive data. The tow-boy had never seen but one laker go through the "Feeder" and she stuck in the mud at Scudder's Falls and staid all winter. The bridge tender, called in for consultation, thought the *Cowles* "a little mite longer than that laker. He remembered they had to lock her down into the Delaware in the spring to get shunt on her. Dusenberry had no advice. He didn't know nawthin' about this old mud-drain anyhow and didn't want to. He could stay all winter under pay. Made no difference to him.

It was a peculiarity of the Patriarch's that he sometimes rose to the occasion. Indeed, there was a suspicion among his brother artists that his early youth had not been altogether spent in the recesses of his studio. Rumor had it that before art claimed him for her own he had so far dallied with commerce and trade as to have taken charge of a merchantman. There was one man who had even asseverated boldly that he had seen him in pea jacket and tarpaulins and other habiliments none the less honorable. His title of "Patriarch" was not conferred upon him by reason of his extreme age or whitened locks, for only with great difficulty could any tell-tale hairs be found to mark the trail of 50 summers, but rather on account of his varied experiences and early occupations.

Calling the Scribe, he disappeared among a group of natives on the bank, interviewed them closely, clambered back, and announced his intention of trying the basin at the quarry and then at Scudder's Falls. In an hour more both points had been reached, measured, and passed. The *Cowles* was too long by a quarter.

The situation now became critical. Here they were in a 95' boat afloat in a 75' canal and no basin nearer than the Delaware. To go backwards was an utter impossibility for it was hardly within power to keep the *Cowles* off the bank or to pass the bridges even with the full use of her rudder. To go forward was ruinous. Besides, the team was tired out. "Gentlemen," said the Patriarch, "there is but one chance left, the timber basin at Titusville."

Again the steady, patient little team bent to their traces. The cry of the tow-boy rang out and Dusenberry's horn, warning the passing "Chunker" was heard along the canal. Past many beautiful firms, under the

high trestle bridge on the Bound Brook route, down the long straight line of the canal, and overlooking the Delaware Valley with the purple mountains beyond, and up to the white swinging bridge at Titusville, glided the *Cowles*. The bridge opened and she slid into the still waters of the basin. The twilight had now settled down. On either side stood the good people of the little town looking with astonishment upon the stately laker with her white awnings under which hung the Chinese lanterns just lighted. The Patriarch's voice woke the crowd to consciousness. "Can we turn our boat here?"

"How long be ye?" came a voice from the bank.

"Ninety-five feet over all."

For a moment there was a dead silence. Then came bounding over the water, "Yes, if you fellows can tote her."

"But the Patriarch did not lose his grip. His eye ran over the curved line of the basin, caught sight of a mooring-spile near the bank, and in a moment the helm was put hard down and the *Cowles* gently rubbed her nose against its oozy bark. Swinging himself clear, he alighted in the grass of the water's edge and made fast a line to a cross tie on the railroad track which skirts the canal.

Then all hands were ordered forward and the boat moved quietly along until her bow sank into the soft edge. "Now take that line aft lively," sung out the Patriarch, "and make it fast to the stern cleat, and pay out to the tow-boy, and don't start the mules till I get aboard."

"Ay, ay, sir!" came a voice from the deck. At this juncture a new difficulty presented itself. A line of coal-loaded "Chunkers" was turning the low point above and making straight for the *Cowles*, which now lay almost at right angles across the canal.

"Hold on with that team, slack up, slack up!" thundered the Patriarch.

"What the... are you doing with that circus boat, blocking up this gangway?" came a return voice. But the Patriarch had no time for explanations. In an instant he was on the *Cowles'* bow, along her deck, and over her stern. She was aground, her rudder blade hard back and the rudder post lifted. Between her and the bank was a skirting of soft marsh grass. If this grass had an equally soft mud bottom there was just one chance in a dozen that a long pull and a strong pull might lift her stern clear and slide her into deep water. He decided to take it. Amid the choice imprecations of the "Chunker" fleet the Patriarch calmly unhooked their mules, doubled up his own team, impressed into service a second tow-boy, and gave the order, "Now, all together!"

Two whips cracked simultaneously. A yell went up from the row of open mouths on the *Cowles*, the tow-line whizzed through the water, the mules bent forward almost to their knees, the boat careened, staggered, and shivered, and the line straightened out like a bar of iron. Suddenly there came a cry from the tow-path.

When the dust cleared away a pile of mules was heaped up in a sand bank and two tow-boys were tangled in a tow-line. The rope had parted! In the momentary silence that followed some one broke out in a loud laugh. It was Dusenberry!

The first attempt to turn the *Cowles* at Titusville had failed dismally. At the critical moment and when the *Cowles* was within an arm's measure of turning her full length, the line had parted, blocking the whole traffic of

the canal and filling the air with the pungent objections of half a score of captains who, from chunker, skuker, and barge expressed in English, terse if not elegant or pious, their condemnation of "a passel of fools who would try to sail a grain boat over a ten-acre lot."

"if she was three feet shorter," remarked the Patriarch quietly, closely examining her stern, "I could handle her."

Behind the locker in Dusenberry's private cabin aft was an ordinary 100' tape-line. The Patriarch took one bank of the basin and one end of the line and Scraps the other. Less than the boat's length below, careful measurement showed the canal slightly wider than where the *Cowles* lay aground. At this point the unwelcome difference of three feet was reduced to two. The Patriarch now crawled along on his knees, plunged his arm under the water, and felt carefully the muddy edge of the yielding earth bank. The profanity of the impeded chunker fleet temporarily ceased and a curious and expectant crowd of natives followed his movements with attention.

"Here we are!" he shouted, springing to his feet. "Get out another line, warp her down, and run her nose in here. The muskrats have done it. Here's a cave-in as deep as a well."

Later in the evening when Dusenberry, seated on his cabin top, smoked his pipe in the moonlight with the bow of the *Cowles* turned toward Trenton and the tow-lines coiled on deck for the morning start, he was overheard to remark to his wife between the puffs, "Marthy, queer kind of canalling this, rootin' 'round in muskrat holes. Never knowed them varmints wuz good for anything before 'cept to skin, and they ain't." Then he leaned forward and whispered, "might have done worse than winterin' here. Guess the pay would a held out."

The morning that broke over the pretty village of Titusville was one to be remembered. A sound sleep, a plunge in the cool basin, and a cup of coffee on deck before the sun had crept up the hill far enough to get a good look at the *Cowles* refreshed everybody. Nor was the sun all alone in this anxiety to see the show-boat. The people turned out. One man sent down half a cartload of ice. Another brought milk, another berries, and a fourth a request from a bevy of pretty girls timidly eying the awnings and flags from a bridge beyond that they be allowed to come aboard before starting.

Will the artistic eyes gathered around the charming table in the cozy salon, with the sunlight sifting in through the awning overhead, ever forget the oval face with the brown eyes framed in the Gainsborough hat, and how daintily she poured tea from that old Satsuma pot covered with pink and yellow peonies, which the Scribe treasured? Were not the rugs spread on deck, and the cushions piled high, and was not the Scribe's guitar handed up, and do they not often hear now in the stillness of their studios the soft voices blending with the gurgling splash of the water about the bow and the cry of the tow-boy as he urges his rested mules back to Trenton? Finally, is it not a tradition that this digression up a feeder, although not on the original programme, left behind it some of the most lasting impressions of this most eventful expedition?

But Trenton hove in sight. Before even the outlying bridges were reached there could be seen the dense smoke of its many chimneys clouding the summer sky, while the roar of constantly passing trains heard afar off bespoke its busy life.

Our tow-boy was not an engaging-looking boy to contemplate. Since his first appearance on deck the previous afternoon he had remained at the end of his tow-line and steadily cared for his team. At this distance he presented a travel-stained, bedraggled aspect. The remnant of a slouch hat clung to one ear, a shock of red hair slanted like a thatched roof over the other. His trousers and cowhide shoes presented a series of patches as varied as a sample card. Over all these was ground and smeared and plastered the red dust of his native state.

The Scribe had regarded the patient, plodding form of the tow-boy for some hours. As he looked now and then over his book from his easy-chair under the awning in the afternoon light he could see him a cable's length ahead, now walking, now riding, now again resting, stretched out full length on the near mule's back with his head reclining on the crupper of the harness and his feet hooked in the hames and collar, fast asleep.

"Boys," said he, after some reflection, "that tow-boy doesn't have much comfort in life. Let's invite him to dinner."

Whether it was owing to the novelty of the idea, or the old spirit of Bohemianism and good fellowship that characterized the group, and for that matter, all other such groups the world over, or whether their individual kindly sympathy prompted the courtesy is not known but it is a fact that Brushes instantly called Moses and ordered another plate at table and that the Patriarch and Scraps proceeded at once to carry out the Scribe's idea.

He came up to the side of the boat and looked up with an air of wonderment that was delightful. He wasn't rigged for company. Chuck him a bottle of beer and a sandwich. He wasn't hungry but that didn't suit the Scribe. He must slack up his tow-line, tie that team by the willows, and come aboard now while the soup was hot.

"Well, if you crowd me," he said, "though you kin see I ain't fitten." When, however, he descended the broad staircase into the hold and caught sight of the rich interior, with its softened light from many colored lamps and lanterns and the luxuriousness everywhere apparent, then the dinner table with its refreshing linen and masses of wild flowers filling the center, he slid down upon the nearest divan with the remark, "Gosh hang! But you fellers have slickened her up! "After that nothing could move him. He would have a pipe if there was one handy but he didn't want no "wittles."

Whether it was the mild stimulant of the Lone Jack or the perfect equality and good fellowship that surrounded him and was steadily maintained, which broke down his reserve, is not worth deciding, but thus be it said that the Scribe interested him at once in his profound ignorance of the genus mule. "Guess you never lived with mules," said Monahan. "When you come to have them by yer 15 years you finds them out."

Then followed some revelations based upon personal observations. To the world in general the mule is a stubborn, vicious, and unintellectual beast, not safe abaft the beam. No one credits the animal with ambition, character, or any feelings akin to human moods, but to all this the driver emphatically objected. "Kick? Why, of course, it is the way they talk, same as a dog's tail. They won't kick you if you treat them decent. I have had them white ones more'n five years and never a cross word out of 'em. That old wheeler

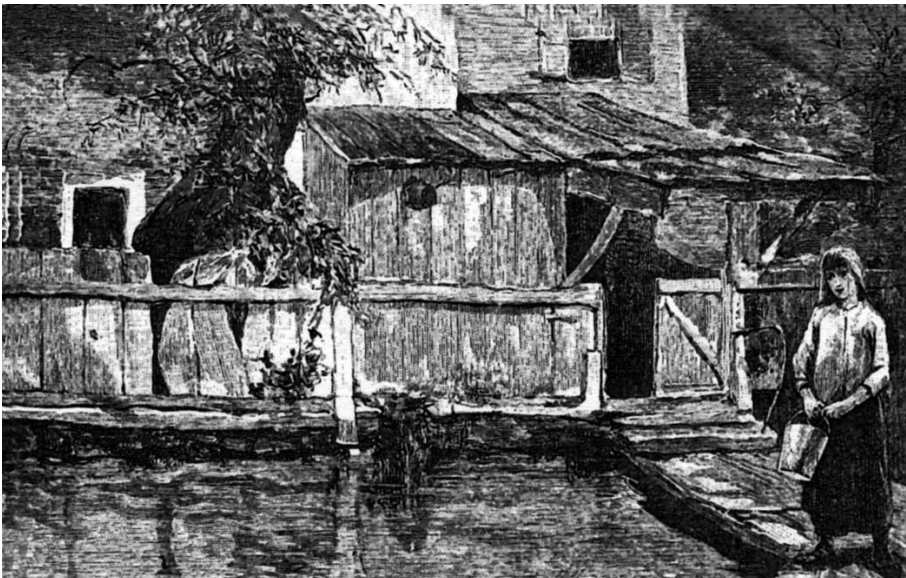


A neighbor near Kingston.



Willows near Princeton.

On the border of an overflow.



knows as much as I do. When I'm asleep on his back and we comin' to a bridge, he ups and lets drive with his heels, much as to say, "Who's runnin' this team?" Nights I always sleep on the long stretches 'cause I know he'll slack up and drop the line for a boat to pass when he sees a light near to. He follows me 'round like a dog."

"How did you do it?"

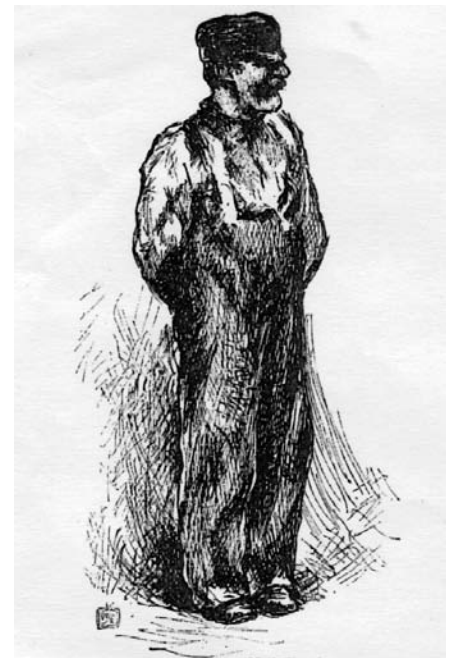
"Reckon he remembers how I fished him out of the drink one night. Some galoots from down river, goin' through in a small yacht, anchored and went to bed. I guess they was the first crowd ever anchored in the canal. I came along with an old schooner called the *Tempest*, full of coal, bound for New Haven. I slacked up the line to slide by. I was on the mule. First I knew we was all five of us in the water, the four mules scared to death and the yacht and the schooner having a swearing match. I yanked the string that slips the hook in the whiffletree, set free the mules, and got 'em all out. Then I joined sides with the schooner."

It was Monahan's opinion that canalling was healthy if people would walk enough to keep well. He often made two 14-mile trips a day and one day within a week had done 38 miles with a light boat, starting at 5:00 in the morning. The drivers were all ages from 12 years up. They got \$30 a month and board through the season. They put up at any station where they happened to be and were on call in turn. It might be that they had only time to feed the team before starting on another lift. Each driver had the entire care of his team and harnesses. His own rest and sleep must be taken in snatches. No, they didn't count much on things between meals.

The braying of one of the impatient teams put an end to the interview and, with profuse thanks, the guest hurried to pick up the slack line.

(To be Continued)

Captain Dusenberry.



Rowing with Tom

By Louis Mackall

Reading your recent photo essay "Paddling with Charlie" prompted me to send on a few photos of my rowing with my quadriplegic friend Tom Luckey. He's a C4 so I get the oars and he gets the sedan chair. Pretty cushy. As can be seen in the photos, the handles on each side of the chair allow four of us to carry him from his electric wheelchair to the boat. This then is tied into the boat. Our usual route is out through the Thimble Islands off Branford, Connecticut, on Long Island Sound. It's a lot of fun being on the water together.

Both of us are what I call "Born Again" rowers. He became a quad about 2½ years ago, before that he rowed almost every day. And for several years we rowed together. We would typically be on the water at 6:05am, rain or shine, winter and summer. I fondly remember standing in mushy ice in the dark as we launched to go out around Cow and Calf, about a mile offshore in Long Island Sound.



Today we're out in a St Lawrence River skiff, made of Kevlar, that was built in Texas with the help of John Mullen, an occasional contributor to MAIB.



Tom before the fall with the boat we rowed in then. It sits at the edge of the sidewalk in front of our houses. The large wheels allowed us to roll it over the edge and onto the beach below, setting it down on the little roller (fender) below. That boat was built by Jon Aborn, a "Monument River Wherry."



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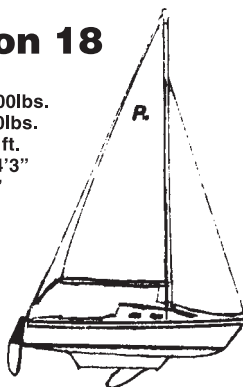
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From Bala Lake to Chester by Canoe

Reprinted from *Paddles Past*

Newsletter of the Historic Canoe & Kayak Association

(As it appeared in *The Graphic*, an illustrated weekly newspaper, dated Saturday 6 November 1880)

The delights of canoeing have been so fully and widely described that the pursuit of late years has become sufficiently popular. The present writers, however, hold that it may be open to question whether a canoe after the model of the birchbark ship of the North American Indian whose particular "forte" lies its navigating the lakes and rivers of his native land in their primitive wildness, is not a better craft for enjoying the pursuit than one built in imitation of the kayak of the Greenlander, which is evidently the source of inspiration of the modern English canoe. The defects of the latter are, briefly, the material of which it is composed, which will not stand rough work in shallow rocky streams, its capacity, which is limited to a solitary occupant, and its deficient stability and carrying power.

These desiderata are all supplied in the case of the Canadian Canoe, sketches of which have lately appeared in *The Graphic* and may do much to popularise its use. Safety and carrying power are ensured by its broad floor and "tumbling home" sides, while an efficient substitute for its birchbark covering may be found in strong canvas paid over with two or three coats of paint. It can be propelled either by sculls or paddles and three persons can be comfortably carried in it.

The canoe depicted in our illustrations is an adaptation of the Canadian canoe, constructed in every particular, save her ironwork, by one of her two navigators. It is easy, therefore, to conceive the agonizing groans that burst from his parental soul when trenchant rock or grinding pebble grated along her sides, the alacrity with which he besought his fellow traveler (somewhat heavier than himself), to hop out in the shallows, the penchant he displayed on suitable occasions for carrying his bantling, in which, as she weighed some 60lbs, his companion allowed him to indulge his bent to the full and lastly, the smile of gratified pride which overspread his features when, at the conclusion of the voyage, he carefully examined her swelling sides and found them scratched, but scatheless.

He may be allowed, perhaps, a few words to state her dimensions, weight, and construction. The canoe *White Rose* is 12.5' long overall, 3' wide, 1' deep amidships, 18" at stern and stem, weighs 60lbs. It is constructed of a skin of strong canvas stretched over a framework of split bamboo canes and kept in shape by five white cedar ribs belonging to a genuine birchbark Indian canoe.

The voyage was remarkable for the scepticism regarding the canoe's powers displayed by the public generally, and for the confidence reposed in her by her owners which was rewarded with success. It was diversified by moving adventures by field and flood, sufficiently delin-

eated in the accompanying sketches, from rapid, rock, and shallow, to the lore of nicely balanced, less or more, conducted by the Ruabon iron workers in endeavouring to drop fragments of ore upon our heads as we passed beneath the viaduct.

Similar comfort was enjoyed at inns, which dissimilarly charged 18s 6d (92.5p) and 8s 4d (42p)(!) for supper, beds, breakfast, and attendance for two. In the latter case we arrived late at the village hostelry where some genial spirits had evidently combined to make a night of it. The landlady, somewhat flustered by our appearance, enjoined calm in the tap room while she went upstairs to inspect the beds. Hardly was her back turned ere one of the toppers raised a sonorous voice in a Bacchanalian ditty. But vengeance was sure, not long delayed. A swift step on the stair, a whirlwind of petticoats swept in, a storm of thumps fell on the offender who, loudly expostulating, was hustled out into the night. Feminine reaction ensued, broken by exclamations, "Oh, how that man has upset me," "Dear me, I'm all of a tremble," while the voice of poetic justice was heard declaring in the hoarse accents of the village Nestor, "Serve him right, 'cos he did it out of aggrawasion."

Words would fail to describe the beauties of the river near Langollen and Ruabon and the futile attempt is therefore not made. The trout at Bala and Langollen leave a pleasant savour on the memory and archaic interest is again aroused by the modern descendant of the ancient British coracle, still one of the lightest and most ingenious of boats.

This delightful story and pictures was taken from *The Graphic*, an illustrated weekly newspaper, dated Saturday 6 November 1880. Unfortunately, there are no details of the artist nor does there appear to be any credit for the text. Of interest are the use of oars with rowlocks and of single bladed paddles, and this at one and the same time. One is left wondering just what "the Rob Roy Manoeuvre" was, drawing, prying, or simply shooting a rapid. It also appears from the drawings that the canoe was a take-apart design.

In later editions of MacGregor's *A Thousand Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe*, the author tells us in the Appendix under "Portable Canoes" that "A wooden canoe in four pieces is easily made, although somewhat heavy. The additional expense is soon saved, if the canoe is taken often by railway as a box."

Editor Comments: Readers interested in learning more about the Historic Canoe & Kayak Association and their journal should contact: Tony Ford, Am Kurpark 4, 37444 St Andreasberg, Germany, Tel: +49-5582 619, Email: tford@web.de.



"Having lightened the ship we proceed" – "The Rob Roy Manoeuvre"



Bala Lake, "Full speed ahead"

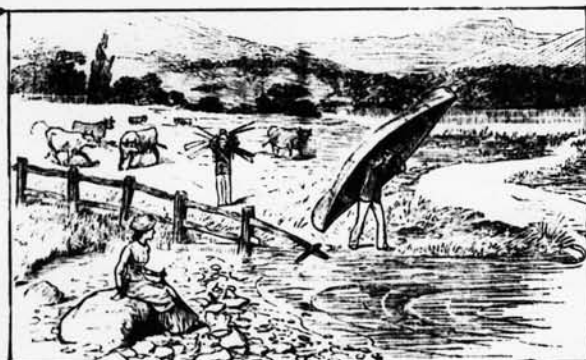
THE GRAPHIC

AN ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

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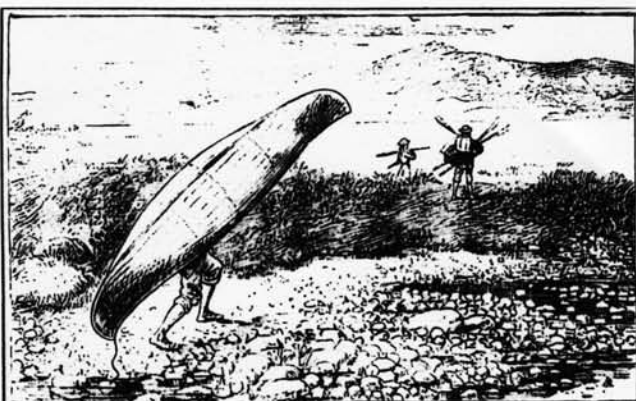
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"Shelter"



"Shallow"



"Shallower still"

The International Scene

Shell joined the growing number of companies that will employ US seafarers on LNG tankers. Shell operates 25 LNG tankers for a Qatar firm.

Offices of several major classification societies were raided by agents of the European Commission's Competition Directorate. Bureau Veritas, DNV, and Lloyd's Register were among those surprised.

Coal suddenly became a hot item internationally. China desperately tried to move coal coastwise and import coal to make up for internal shipments delayed by severe storms to power plants in that nation. And met (metallurgical) coal was in general short supply and that may be affecting China's ability to make steel.

China is eager to begin shipping to a hub in Iceland via the Arctic. It could start as early as 2015.

The US Coast Guard was generally pleased with its response to the *Cosco Busan* oil spill at San Francisco but issued a list of over 100 "lessons-learned." And medication for the pilot's sleep apnea may have played a part in that spill.

Thin Places and Hard Knocks

Ships took on water, sometimes fatally:

Off Devon the timber carrier *Ice Prince* lost part of its deck load, listed, lost power, and eventually sank. A badly injured crew man was helicoptered off. Soon more than 2,000 tons of its deck cargo of sawn timbers were strewn the shore, looking in aerial photos like straw cast on the beaches.

Off Taiwan's west coast the gravel-loaded Panamanian-registered *Da Ji* (or *Ta Ji*, take your choice) capsized and sank, killing 13 of its crew of 25.

On the Great Lakes the 1,000' laker *Walter J McCarthy Jr* hit a submerged object, possibly a concrete pile, and partially sank at its pier in Duluth.

In Indonesia's Papua the *Ratna Utama* sank after hitting coral and nine of 17 on board were missing.

Even tugboats sank. On the US West Coast the 45' *Joe Foss* sank while en route to a new home. Its crew of three was rescued.

On the Canadian east coast the small tug *Check-Mate II* sank while en route to a new home. The crew of two was found dead, floating in survival suits that "had considerable water inside."

Ships made the acquaintance of sea bottoms or shores:

The chemical carrier *Cosmo* touched bottom at the Italian port of Ancona but suffered no damage.

The Danish tanker *Hanne Theresa* ran aground in the Gulf of Finland on its way to load a cargo of liquid fertilizer.

In the same Gulf the *RMS Satma* ran aground and got holed in the process.

The vehicle carrier *City of Sunderland* ran aground off Norfolk, UK, but the tugs *Svitzer Trimley* and *Grey Test* pulled it off.

The product tanker *Mariella* dragged its anchor in Weymouth Bay and nearly went aground. Luckily the large tug *Anglian Earl* was working on a nearby wreck project and provided a helping line.

The sand-laden *Tai Chi Lun* ran aground off the coast of China and 11 of the crew of 25 went missing.

In Denmark the coaster *South Michele* was blown out of the channel and aground at Naksov. The same ship went aground

Beyond the Horizon

By Hugh Ware

at Naksov in December, that time due to a drunken Russian master.

Also in Denmark the bulk carrier *Trans Pacific* with 68,978 tons of potash for US farmers ran aground. It was soon re-floated by a fleet of salvaging vessels.

In Northern Ireland the RNLI lifeboat *Katie Hannan* was thrown ashore on rocky Rathlin Island and badly holed during a rescue and its crew of three needed rescuing by a smaller lifeboat. The *Hannan* will be retrieved from the land side.

In Chesapeake Bay the *MSC Japan* grounded near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and was freed by two tugs.

The Irish Sea ro-ro ferry *Riverdance* was hit by a freak wave and ended on its side on the beach at Blackpool, a winter-time attraction at the famed playground for lower-class Brits.

In South America a big articulated tug/barge loaded with coils of sheet steel ended up on its side on a sandbar at Sao Francisco do Sol in Brazil.

Ships caught fire:

In Peru the navy's bunker barge *Bap Sude* exploded three times and sank two hours later while transporting crude oil from a commercial oil platform to a state-owned refinery.

In the Adriatic the Turkish cargo ship *Und Adriyatak* loaded with 200 trucks and more caught fire and pollution of Croatian beaches was (needlessly, it turned out) feared.

The Chinese freighter *Jin Hui* arrived at Geelong with a cargo of smoldering palm kernels (used for cattle feed).

The container ship *MSC Chancea* had an engine room fire off Saldanha Bay in South Africa and yelled for help but the crew managed to kill the fire without that help.

Ships collided:

In Rønne, Denmark, the St Vincent-registered coaster *Rybnun* and the Danish suction dredger *Ahiseli* collided with the dredge getting the worst of it. Both managed to sail into port.

In Kola Bay the tanker *Usinsk* collided with the large tanker *Belokamenka*. No leakages.

Off the Isles of Scilly at Great Britain's western end the *Horncliff* lost some containers overboard in Force 10 winds and ran into one of them, badly holing itself. A search was initiated for the floating containers before their cargoes of bananas got too ripe.

Off South Korea a cargo ship and a tug collided, the ship sank.

Other bad things happened:

The boom of a container crane at Southampton collapsed across the container ship *Kyoto Express*, putting a stop to work there for some time.

Egypt sought the cargo ship *Badr I* (named after Pakistan's first satellite?) in the Red Sea after it and its crew of 17 had not been heard from for several days.

The Russian cargo ship *Captain Ustinov* was missing in the East China Sea for more than two weeks but was found by Chinese services. For some time it was surmised that it may have been taken by pirates.

In the Mediterranean the gigantic (13,500 teu) newbuild container ship *Elly Maersk* had engine problems and needed tug help.

The chief engineer of the *Brothers-12* apparently fell overboard while the vessel was in an ice convoy heading for Kerch Strait.

The cargo ship *Siwa* docked at Dover with two crew members dead from unknown causes.

The cargo ship *Susie* asked French authorities to evacuate one of its crew men who was suffering from giddiness. Helicoptered ashore, he was dead on arrival. Then another crew man needed evacuation, same symptoms. The cause may have been phosphine intoxication from an anti-germination coating on the ship's cargo of peas.

A big wave hit the bulk carrier *Grand Glory* off Canada's West Coast and five were injured, two seriously enough to be hospitalized.

And a lifeboat dropped on crew members on the *MSC India* for no apparent reason and killed two.

Gray Fleets

In the Far East Indonesia took delivery of the third of 4 1,600-ton corvettes built by a Netherlands shipyard. The Sigma-class *Nar* arrived at Jakarta about the first of the New Year.

North Korea may sell mini-sub to Iran in payment for unspecified debts.

Singapore commissioned three frigates of the Trident-class. The first was built in a French yard while the other two were built in Singapore.

Japan launched a helicopter carrier but called it a "destroyer." The 13,500-ton-displacement warship has an island at one side of its deck, is designed for anti-sub operations, and may be able to carry up to 22 helicopters or vertical-flight aircraft.

An Australian company is working with the Chinese Navy to develop high-speed catamarans capable of firing missiles. China's fleet of 55 attack subs conducted only six patrols last year, up from two the year before, and its ballistic-missile subs have never been out on patrol once, claimed one expert. But a US admiral stated China will have built more subs than the US by 2011.

Finally China allowed the US Navy flagship *USS Blue Ridge* to stop off at Hong Kong, the first such event since the rejections last Thanksgiving of the *USS Kitty Hawk* carrier group and other naval and air force visitors.

In the Middle East France plans to build a base in Abu Dhabi by 2009 to support French forces in the region. Several hundred military and naval types will eventually be stationed there.

Three Nazi subs were discovered in the Black Sea off Turkey. U19, U20, and U23 were among six subs taken 2,000 miles by road and river to the Romanian port of Constanza during World War II. The flotilla sank dozens of ships but the last three afloat were scuttled when Romania switched sides in August 1944.

Once upon a time the largest warships were battleships. Then came aircraft carriers. Now the Dutch will build its largest warship, a 26,000-ton Joint Support Ship that will provide amphibious and logistical support in peace and war.

The refrigeration unit used to store meat on *HMS Illustrious* threatened to fail so the warship turned back from a deployment to multi-national operations in the Indian Ocean.

The US Navy will probably build only two of six Littoral Combat ships planned for fiscal 2009. In 2007 continuously varying specifications for two radically different designs met head to head with the contractors' fixed prices and two of a planned four ships

were cancelled. But technical risk, not costs, were why the 2009 buy order was shaved said a Navy spokesman.

Venezuela may buy three of Russia's Kilo-class subs this April and deliveries could start by year's end. The Kilo design is old but each is one of the world's quietest diesel subs.

White Fleets

Proposed US Customs and Border Protection bureau regulations requiring foreign-flag cruise ships to spend a minimum of 48 hours in a foreign port will disrupt cruises to the Caribbean, Alaska, and around the Hawaiian Islands. The regulations were called "radical" and "based on flawed analysis" by industry spokesmen who said the cost will run into the billions. The new regulations would force US-based cruises to either cease operations or start from non-US ports. Loser here seems to be NCL America, which operates Hawaiian cruises with US-flagged ships.

The Hurtigruten cruise line, not content with extending its Norwegian coastal operations to Greenland, Spitzbergen, and the Antarctic, now wants to expand to the White Sea and Russian tourists.

Congestion at Mombasa forced port authorities to cancel visits by more than 15 cruise ships. A major factor in planning cruise ship itineraries now is security.

The *Pacific Star* made news once again when high seas and winds from Cyclone Funa left five passengers injured, moved fridges, and broke much glassware.

Local residents and Greek authorities are demanding that the owners of the sunken *Sea Diamond* remove oil in its tanks. That cruise ship sank at Santorini last April because of charts that the owners demonstrated were inaccurate. Look for an argument over who pays for any oil removal.

Those That Go Back and Forth

The jetfoil ferries *Funchal* and *Santa Maria*, owned by the same Chinese company, managed to collide in thick fog off Macau. Both Boeing-built vessels were damaged and 136 people suffered injuries, some serious.

The Chinese ferry *Shen Zhen Chun* hit rocks near Zhuhai and 66 people were removed.

In Fiji the *Westerland* was blown onto a reef by Cyclone Gene.

The Washington State ferry *Yakima* hit a dock at Eagle Harbor and holed itself.

In South Korea, seven passengers on a high-speed ferry out of Busan were hurt when the ship hit something, probably a porpoise as blood and flesh were found afterwards.

Legal Matters

A Norwegian P&I club sued the Norwegian government, saying it knew of the rock on which the bulk carrier *Rocknes* foundered in 2004 but never put it on charts. The accident cost 18 men their lives. (P&I = protection and indemnity, a form of marine insurance; club = organization.)

The owners of the container ship *New Delhi Express* sued the US government over its vessel's grounding at New York last April, averring that a critical buoy was 25 yards out of position.

Spain appealed a US court decision that it had no jurisdiction in Spain's suit against the ABS over the breakup, sinking, and subsequent 63,000-tonne oil spill from the tanker *Prestige* in 2002 that befouled the coasts of Spain, Portugal, and France.

Drinking and driving? The Ukrainian

master of the coaster *Helen* was found with three times the legal limit at Southampton so he had to decide between paying a fine of £500 or 14 days in a British gaol.

And the first mate of the *Wilson Garston*, which went aground at Helsingborg in December, was sentenced to three months in a Swedish jail. He was drunk and fell asleep on duty, although pharmaceuticals may have helped him doze.

The US government frowns heavily on discharges of oily substances into the sea so an Italian shipping company and the chief engineer of the *Windsor Castle* pled guilty while the former chief engineer of the vehicle carrier *Tanabata* got six months in jail.

And eight Filipino seamen split a \$730,000 cash award for blowing the whistle about illegal discharges of oily water from two ships.

Illegal Imports

A Greek court ruled that the master and two others from the reefer *Coral Sea* must stay in jail without charges. They were suspected of drug smuggling when 51.6 kilos of cocaine were found in two of more than 27,000 pallets of bananas while unloading at Aegion. Orders to head for that port arrived while the ship was at sea, some 13 days out from Guayaquil, Ecuador.

In Liberia 90 barrels of "first class pure" cocaine (about 2.4 tons or half a billion US dollars) were destroyed after the French Navy intercepted a satellite radio call and arrested the Liberian-flagged *Blue Atlantic*.

A French Navy vessel also stopped the Panamanian-flagged *Junior* in international waters and found 107 cases, each with 30 kilos of cocaine.

A camp for refugees at Calais, whose planning had been encouraged by the local Communist mayor, was closed a few days after it was opened, reportedly on orders from the French president and interior minister. British authorities had feared that the camp would be a staging area for illegals trying to enter the UK via Dover to claim asylum.

Two teenage Kenyan stowaways survived eight days on a tiny ledge above the rudder of the bulkier *New Auspicious* only because the ship was lightly loaded and the platform was well above water.

Nature

For more than two weeks Greenpeace's *Esperanza* chased Japanese whalers in the Antarctic to keep them from shooting at whales. But fuel ran low and so *Esperanza* headed for Australia. Once there, Greenpeace changed its mind, saying it has limited resources and had decided to take the fight directly to Japan. The group also noted that the situation is different from previous years. The Japanese government clearly feels under pressure, it abandoned the kill of 50 humpbacks after a formal protest by 31 nations and the government urged Australia to take action against Greenpeace and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. Two members of that latter group were held on board a Japanese harpoon boat for two days after delivering a letter of protest.

Norway also kills whales and set a 2008 quota of 1,052 minke whales, although quotas are rarely met because the small whales are so difficult to harpoon. Only the meat is saved from those killed, the blubber is thrown away since it has no market.

The Scottish minister of the environment was "very concerned" about the dam-

age rats could do to a remote Western Islands island. They may have got ashore when the trawler *Spinning Daze* ran onto rocks off St Kilda and 14 fishermen had to be winched to safety by a helicopter.

Jacques Cousteau's *Calypso* will be rebuilt to roam the seas again now that his second wife and widow has won a vicious fight with Cousteau's son over who owned the vessel. The World War II ex-US Navy wooden minesweeper will need a complete rebuild after years of neglect and a sinking. She announced that funds were available.

Metal-Bashing

Mexico wants to get into "green" ship recycling and plans a yard at Lazaro Cardenas. Some of the ships might come from the US Maritime Administration's fleet of "ghost" ships moored in Suisan Bay near San Francisco.

A French firm will develop a site on the River Garonne near Bordeaux into that nation's first dedicated ship-scraping site. Its first victim may be the ex-aircraft carrier *Clemenceau*.

A new shipbuilding yard in India will use much of the equipment from the UK's defunct Swan Hunter Shipyard, including its floating drydock. The yard can build ships up to 100,000dwt and will be in operation within two years.

The Indian supreme court told the federal government to relax its guidelines on ship scrapping and India's intelligence community warned that there is a strong possibility that terrorists and criminals use and profit from the Alang scrap yards. The Indian criminal network D-gang is said to have close ties to Usama bin Laden and maybe 40-50% of the scrap trade is illegal. The crews of ships arriving for scrapping may also include terrorists and criminals.

Nasties and Territorial Imperatives

A new icebreaking and terminal tug, built in eastern Russia and on its delivery voyage to an LNG terminal in Russia's far east, was captured by pirates off Somalia. The six crewmen were safe.

Because of violence in Nigeria lately, Maersk and Bourbon have stopped operations in the area and other companies, including Shell, Total, and ExxonMobil, have cut back.

The chemical/oil tanker *Golden Lucy* had an explosion while unloading gasoline at Port Harcourt. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, one of several active Nigerian militant groups, claimed credit. The group hopes to totally disrupt the oil industry this year after talks with the government failed.

Japan's government used its overwhelming majority in the lower house to over ride a pacifist-minded, opposition-led upper house and sent a naval refueling ship and its escort back to the Middle East to support the US-led war on terror in Afghanistan.

Head-Shaker

Some people are just not grateful for a free ride. Police were called to the *Caprojo* anchored in the North Sea off England. Conditions were rough so six policemen were helicoptered out and winched down through 35mph gusts to the deck. Their quarry? A Turkish stowaway who had emerged on deck and gone berserk, throwing things at the crew and threatening to set fire to flammables. They finally spotted him on top of a 52-metre crane. He was talked down and arrested. He will be deported.

My dad always carried a knife. When he came home from work each day he would empty out his pockets into a shallow, carved wooden bowl on his dresser that was shaped much like a church collection plate. There among the coins, the keys, and a pencil or two would invariably be a small folding knife. I was usually after the coins but I remember the little knives. Not sturdy, perhaps, but strong enough to provide service for cutting string or paper, if needed.

A drawer in Dad's garage workshop held several other edge tools. There were larger knives with which a kid could carve or scrape something. Most had locking blades so I could safely probe or poke into hollow trees or under rocks or into crevices if necessary. There were sheathed blades, some of which were reserved for cleaning fish, and others which worked well for throwing at trees. I lost more than one in that manner and was taught in no uncertain terms that there were several "unacceptable uses," including that one.

There were many other blade tools with specific uses in the garden or the kitchen or the shop. Dad taught us how to sharpen and care for them and he was respectful of both their capabilities and their inherent dangers. Pocket and sheathed knives were always suitable holiday or birthday presents among the "men" in the family.

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Why I Carry a Knife

By Jim Parmentier

Dad's appreciation for knives came to full fruition on board his boats. He wore a sheathed stainless steel sailing knife on his belt with a separate marlinspike attached to the sheath by a light braided line we always called parachute cord. He enjoyed making turks' heads on boathooks and stanchions or the center aligned spoke of the wheel on his Dickerson 35' ketch, and he always had ready access to a good blade in case he needed to trim a line, to splice or whip its ends, or to cut away lobster pot lines should they ever entangle his prop. Such arguments held great sway with my brother and I, even though our boat at the time was a Flying Scot, a 19' fiberglass craft rigged mostly with wire and shackles, and better serviced with a pair of pliers than a sailing knife.

These thoughts came back to me on a blowy Sunday morning last September on the final day of our 2007 boating season. *Iolanthe*, our 31' Cape Dory cutter, was scheduled for haulout at the Mattapoisett (Massachusetts) Boatyard later that week. My only goal for the day was to unload large, awkward or heavy objects such as cushions, sails, blankets, and spare batteries so that the next weekend we could focus on the more delicate items once she was on the hard.

The wind was blowing 25 knots out of the northeast, which meant it was crosswise to the only remaining floating dock, the other docks and the outer piece of that one had already been pulled for the season. I made a good upwind approach, turned sharply at the end to swing starboard side to, and we passed our lines to Dave Kaiser, the Mattapoisett yard manager, and some other fellow who saw us approaching and came to take our lines.

Our standard docking arrangement involves passing the bitter end of a standard dock line through the feet of a sturdy mid-ship cleat and leading it back to the cockpit jib winch (port or starboard). With this system, if either a deckhand or a dockhand can just drop the bight over a cleat on the dock I can control all the rest of the operation, adjusting and securing the dock line without having to leave the cockpit. Putting the mid-ship line on first will secure the boat so that the bow and stern lines can then be handled in a more leisurely fashion. In this instance, I asked Dave to secure the bow line across the wet dock to a cleat on its upwind side. If we had tied it to a downwind cleat the line would have been pulling almost straight up. Dave and his friend then returned to the yard.

I got off onto the dock and Beth handed me the largest boat cushion, which I carried up the ramp and deposited in the car because the dock was wet with spray and splash. When I returned to the dock a minute later to take the next cushion, I heard the upwind hinge of floating dock making loud squawking noises with each incoming swell. With *Iolanthe* fast and broadside in the 25kt wind her full weight was twisting the dock to the east. I realized that the two lag bolts of the upwind hinge were all that were holding my boat in place and that they were beginning to fail. No more time for gear. I clambered back on board and started the engine. The wind seemed to increase, there was a lot of bouncing, and all my dock hand assistants

had gone somewhere else. There was no one to be seen in the yard. Beth and I would have to get away by ourselves.

Leaving a dock with no dockside help is straightforward using lines that belong to the dock or lines whose ends are both controlled from the boat. The latter technique is much easier to do if the lines are arranged that way in the first place. Since I wanted to keep my lines, I needed to re-rig the existing ones in a hurry. With the bow and stern secure I could loosen and replace the loop of my mid-ship line with another, shorter one that led around the cleat and back onto the boat. I prepared such a line, cleated it off amidships and left its bitter end on deck by the cleat. I then pulled out about 50' of a spare anchor line and gave it to Beth, telling her to secure it at that point to the second of our two bow cleats.

When that was done I hopped down onto the dock, holding the bitter end of the line. By now *Iolanthe* and the dock were each dancing to a different rhythm and I was uncomfortable leaving her. What if the dock pulled free when I wasn't onboard? What chance would Beth have of maneuvering a dock/boat combination as it was being blown eastward out across Buzzards Bay towards Woods Hole? The dock hinge was protesting louder now and the dock had twisted lengthwise a bit as well as sideways. Its downwind edge was awash while the upwind edge rose 6-8" out of the water, aided, no doubt, by the upwind placement of the now guitar-string-taught bowline.

I took this all as a measure of progressive hinge failure. I quickly removed the original mid-ship line, passed my new one around the cleat, and secured the bitter end back on the mid-ship cleat. Remember, the original line just passed through the feet of that cleat. I then passed the spare anchor line around a different upwind dock cleat and led it back to Beth, telling her to secure it by taking several turns around the cleat horn, but NOT to cleat it fast. This was the end she would have to release and then pull back on board by pulling it around the dock cleat once we were underway and do so with out entangling it in our propeller.

As *Iolanthe* danced back and forth at the dock Beth's line began to take up some of her weight and I was able to loosen and remove the initial bow line. The stern line now hung slack and, as *Iolanthe* settled back on the new mid-ship line, I could see a remarkable increase in the gap between boat and dock, a gap which I eventually would have to cross to get back aboard. It occurred to me that getting off the boat may not have been such a good idea. I removed the now useless stern line and tossed it into the cockpit. The starboard shroud, which I usually use to help me board, was too far from the dock but the stern pulpit was still reachable.

I leaned out, grabbed it, and scrambled back on board in a unfamiliar manner, having to twist and roll under the safety line and grab at the wheel to pull myself in. I moved forward as quickly as possible and found the mid-ship line to be so tight that I couldn't get its cleating undone. I hollered to Beth to release the free end of the bow line and pull it around the cleat and in. I opened my sailing knife and in a few strokes managed to cut the dock line free from the cleat. The bowline pulled cleanly past its cleat and we were away. There was lots of sea room and we were fine. We left before the dock pulled loose, all's well that ends well, but that was close enough for me. That's why I carry a knife.

I think they're like snowflakes. You know, no two of 'em alike. It's pretty hard to prove it. At least it's hard for me to prove it. But I've looked at the backs, sides, and fronts of a whole lot of waves in my time on God's puddles and oceans. Waves. I think they're under-rated and under-appreciated. I don't think we messers and sailors pay near enough attention to waves.

Sure, we remember the ones that turn us over. We certainly remember the ones that fill the cockpit, or, heaven forbid, the ones that fill the cabin. But most of the time we manage to float on top. Most of 'em we never even see coming. The vast majority of the waves we meet just pass harmlessly and anonymously under and astern of us. Waves get about as much notice as white hash marks on the freeway. I know that both of my *MAIB* heroes, Robb and Phil, have done a much more empirical analysis of wave forms and such. I just like to watch 'em.

Perhaps the best of all places to watch waves is from the lee side of a small sailboat, romping along at hull speed. There's that magic, but usually fleeting, moment where the quarter wave is trying to swallow the, well, the quarter. There is this satisfying hollow under that mid point in the sheer line that would normally be the closest-to-the-water part of the deck. Sure, sure, the dramatic pictures we keep for calendars are of the windward side, the keel root just beginning to break the surface, the rudder vortex displayed in a ribbon of bubbles. But you don't get to see that while it's happening. Somebody else has to take your picture while ignoring the subtlety of action along his own lee side, no doubt.

No, the lee side is the place to do the watching. The bow wave is sluicing along with that sort of metallic splattering sound. The leeside wake is doing its perpendicular/oblique paradox. I say it's usually fleeting because, at least in my case, I'm probably steering at a time like this. It's way too easy to get sucked into studying the wave train and lose that fine balance with the apparent wind, weather helm, and heel angle. Just as soon as you get it all dialed in, it changes. And that's just the boat-made waves.

Back when Uncle Sam used to pay me to ride around on gray ships I had occasion to study a lot of waves. More waves than wakes. You see, I never liked that cloud of tobacco smoke that is permanently attached to the fantail of most ships underway. Of course, it hasn't been all that long since a guy had to cut his way into most below decks spaces and bring his own breathing air in his whitehat. So I discovered pretty early on that the only place to get breathable air on a ship at sea was to go up on the foc'sl when running to windward. You see, the stack gas cloud pretty much glues itself to the whole outerworks on the downwind legs. But get out on the pointy end in a moderate sea state with the apparent breeze forward of the mid chocks and you have perfect conditions for wave watching. And breathing. Both are nice.

Waves. Mr Beaufort's number scale is pretty interesting. The scientific side of messing and sailing. Granted, it's pretty much like explaining the rules of the road to a beginner. That notion that the wind blows continuously over an expanse of water without refraction, wind shifts, or current effects is about as likely as two stinkpots meeting at right angles will sound the proper signals and all that stuff. Just like the actual behavior of boats in danger of collision, at least on San Diego Bay, it is a whole lot more like Dar-

Boats Really Don't Make Sense

Waves

By Dan Rogers

win's explanation. I think waves have to live in an eat-or-be-eaten environment most of the time, too. But that's part of what makes wave watching so interesting.

For the sailor, at least, a glance to windward will tell you what's going to be happening in a minute or so at the mast head. It's the whole story. Puffs and lulls. Shifts. All that wind stuff is written in the face of the waves coming at you. Actually, it's written more on the backs of the waves. But most of the time they're short and low enough that you can see the whole thing from your seat. You can read 'em like the faces of strangers on a crowded sidewalk. Each has a personality. Some will pass without interaction. Some will brush close by. Some will fetch up in your face and spill your brief case.

I suppose the object lesson here in SOCAL would be more apt on a crowded freeway. You know, trying to judge which SUV-driven-by-cell-phone will pass under your quarter. Which will graze your bow. Which is going to board you amidships if you don't put the helm down and ring up a backing bell. Just like waves on the water. No two of these hundred-mile-an-hour chariots is weaving in and out of traffic with the same exact angles of incidence or refraction.

I particularly enjoy watching the ripples and wavelets that form behind a well-designed rowing boat. You get to watch 'em as part of your "command responsibility." For once you're SUPPOSED to be looking behind you while operating the vessel. The wake of a rowing boat tells her master just about everything about how well she is tracking toward her goal. Granted, there is the occasional boat, piling, or rock that jumps into the way of the stem post while the oarsman is contentedly studying his set and drift while facing backward. I do like how a guy can leave little rings in the water that just sort of stay there, like footprints in the snow, way, way behind the boat. They tell him if one arm is pulling deep or slightly askew. They tell him if he is getting anyplace.

Waves. Big, little, round, straight, commonplace, or memorable. No two of 'em are alike.

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Unlike many romantic stories, this one is true. Over 200 years ago an English carpenter was sailing in trade to Oldcourt on the Ilan River in County Cork when he fell in love with a local girl, married her, and settled in the area. He taught his four sons how to build boats and they grew up to carry on the tradition alongside local families. So the Pyburns and their descendants leavened the mix of ideas and expertise which led to the Cork lobsterboats of the 19th century as built by them and the Skinners, the Minihanes, the O'Driscolls, and the Bushes. Less promising plot outlines have provided the basis for historical novels.

In the drawing you see a typical example. This one was being built outside a cottage when it was photographed in 1891. It would be used for fishing the coastline around County Cork from Ardmore in the east to the Kenmare River, about 105 miles point to point but much more if the numerous coves, bays, and estuaries are taken into account. Crewed by two men and the skipper, with perhaps a boy, these boats were between 24' and 28' with a beam of 6'-7' and they drew about 3'. They could be handled easily short-handed under oar or sail. An extended family could afford to run one. In the late 19th century the mackerel and herring fisheries were in full swing but the lobster fishery was based only on Heir Island, East and West Skeam Islands, and in the Aughadown area on the mainland which faces the islands and runs from Whitehall to Oldcourt up the Ilan River.

The crews would fish away from home for up to a week, sometimes longer, until they had a worthwhile catch. They would shoot the pots every two hours, day and night, then anchor in sheltered inlets before returning to haul them. A hard life. They carried 24-30 pots strung together and generally baited with salt mackerel. The increased range of the boats came with the use of sail; first the spritsail, then occasionally the dipping lug, and finally the boomless gaff rig. Previously small fishing boats had been rowed but now the pots could be hauled under sail or oar. The midships or flood oar on a 27-footer would be about 18' long, the bow oar a little shorter. There was only one mast. The name "yawls" here carries the earlier meaning of a light working or pleasure sailboat rather than the later one, the outcome of racing rules, which defined a two-masted craft which carried the lesser sail area aft and mounted the mizzen mast aft of the rudder stock.

The lobsterboats were divided inside by the aft thwart (thauft) and the forward one, which supported the mast step. The stern sheets would be used for the helmsman and for open stowage while the area between the seats, euphemistically called the "holt" (hold), was where the real work was done. There was no planked sole to this area. Heavy stones were collected from the beach for ballast and they were given an easier surface underfoot by the admixture of gravel. Selecting the right ballast from the shore was something of a ritual. It is the space between the mast and stem which is of special interest.

You will have realized by now, I hope, why these boats are not out of place in our pages. These men and boys were working dinghy cruising sailors, no less. Fishing boats under 30 feet were the tiddlers of their time. There was no room for cabins or sophisticated galleys so day-to-day living afloat was a mat-

The Towelsail Yawls of Roaringwater Bay

By Keith Muscott

Reprinted from the *DCA Bulletin*
Dinghy Cruising Association (UK)
Newsletter #194, Spring 2007

*An Irish fairy tale: how the forgotten
lobsterboats of Cork are putting to sea again*

ter of improvisation. The crews got by using a level of gear that even the most austere dinghy sailor would find inadequate nowadays. And don't even mention health and safety.

The defining characteristic of the boats was the tent, pitched forward for sleeping and eating. Most of us would not be happy with something so primitive (but there are some well-known exceptions in the DCA). This canvas sheet was the "towel" and the name had nothing to do with bathing. The word comes from the Gaelic "teabhal" and it was both a tent and a sail. As a tent it was draped over a spar (oar or boathook) which was lashed about 6' up the mast and tied to the stem. The edges of the "towel" were weighted outside the gunwale with planks (see drawing) and brought back inboard, a simple ploy for keeping out wet and wind. It was only necessary to tie it down in a gale. A bolt-rope was stitched into the edge of the cloth with cringles where needed. A tent like this was a common sight on 19th century fishing boats at one time, but it was used on Irish lobsterboats much later than on other types and it was bigger. The size had less to do with its function as a shelter as its characteristics as a sail. It was jury-rigged as a kind of spinnaker when it became necessary to run a heavily-laden boat before a gale. These boats made the "teabhal" their own and the name stuck.

There was a bow locker right forward under a very small foredeck. It housed the stores of tea, sugar, and soda for the bread as well as Sunday clothes. The flour was kept from damp in whatever waterproof container suggested itself. In front of the mast, clay and sometimes turf or straw was used on top of the ballast to insulate the cooking fire in its bastible pot from the structure of the boat. A piece of corrugated iron was raised to protect the mast when the fire was lit. Bread was baked inside a second pot, two cakes for the three daily meals which were much appreciated when served hot with butter. Some skippers were known to have their own toothsome variations such as adding crab meat to the mix. Fresh fish was eaten with potatoes and when times got lean there was always the salt-mackerel bait.

The photograph of the fisher-lad, taken from the famous Father Browne collection and dating from 1928, gives no real indication of whether the boy was happy with his lot. The faraway expression might only be a reaction to his being surprised by a priest with a camera so far up Cork Harbour. We might still be able to ask him about it if he has survived into his late 90s. The photograph does give a wonderful sense of the living conditions on board though. There is an enamel tea mug (either newly drained or still too hot to hold, I remember them well), there is the straw spread on the ballast to form an insulated mattress, and there is the smoke from the fire stoked up to cook food which he has no doubt been set to watch, priest or no priest.



Behind the mast thwart there was about 20' of boat. Remember that at least 24 pots were stowed and live lobsters in keep nets, which would be held over the side only when at rest. There would be the warp and anchor, possibly just a suitably-shaped stone whose loss among the kelp and shoals would not be grieved, and fuel for the fire. There was clearly no room for luxury or for any equipment above the irreducible minimum, even if it could be afforded. Tidy storage spelt the difference between the success or failure of a cruise.

The method of supporting the boat as it dried out was simplicity itself (see drawing). Wooden legs with lanyards attached would be jammed under the legwales to port and starboard and held in place by pulling the lanyards through a hole bored through the wale and cleating them off tightly inboard over the gunwales. These long-keeled hulls needed no more. It was very late in the history of the type when bolts replaced the lanyards. The thought strikes me that the same idea could be used in dinghies with steep deadrise which do not dry out level. In their case the lower freeboard means the gunwales could serve as legwales. Holes could be bored through the topsides into the existing holes for the rowlocks, then could be reinforced neatly by using the same hardware as that used for rowlocks, but horizontally (see drawing), with a little modification. In this case the lanyard would pass horizontally through leg and topside, not out of the crown of the leg. Paddles or similar could be used as legs, so emulating the workboat example of never having an item on board with just one function.

On the yawls there would be no clocks, charts, or compasses. Local knowledge and instincts honed by a lifetime of wrestling their living from this dangerous environment were their navigation aids. They could smell out reefs and skerries. The sky and the changing wind would tell them when to run for shelter. A hand held up horizontally at arm's length in the gap between the setting sun and the edge of the horizon estimated their remaining daylight, the width of four fingers between sun and sea gave an hour to sunset. The fingers (without thumbs) of both hands gave two hours. Each finger rated 15 minutes. If there was clear weather there was no land to disrupt this system between them and Nova Scotia.

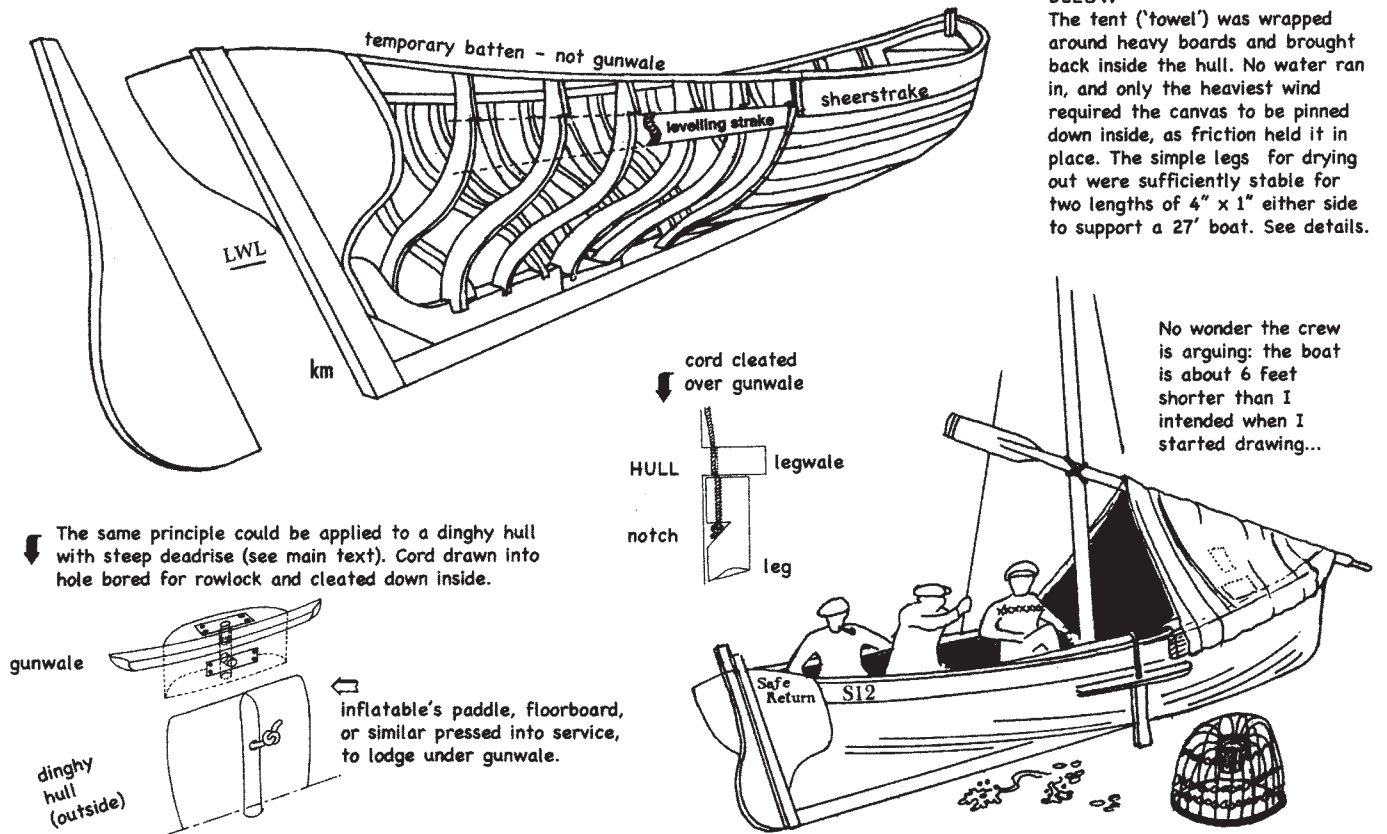
The Towelsail Yawl c.1891

(based on photographs of Irish lobsterboats in the build, 1891)

The sheerstrake laps over the levelling strake and the carvel plank below it, to add stiffness to a fairly light hull. Dry locker in bows.

BELOW

The tent ('towel') was wrapped around heavy boards and brought back inside the hull. No water ran in, and only the heaviest wind required the canvas to be pinned down inside, as friction held it in place. The simple legs for drying out were sufficiently stable for two lengths of 4" x 1" either side to support a 27' boat. See details.



The lessons we can learn from these old boats and their crews are not new ones. Sail well within your capability, learn about the locality, and know when and where to run for shelter are the obvious ones. These men followed that advice under the urgency of having to earn a living. Of all the boats whose histories I have read, only about four were sunk, two of those in storms on moorings and one under tow. Most boats just faded away. They were given the indignity of garden shed deck houses and had engines fitted. The type languished during two World Wars, and the rising demand for lobsters in the 1950s meant that modern, powerful steel and GRP craft provided the best income for fishermen. Some boats were hauled out for refits that never happened. Others rotted on moorings. Then just in time something happened which saved them on the very cusp of extinction. Perhaps it is wrong to attribute it all to the efforts of just a few people, but it was one boat and two or three men who started the ball rolling.

The yawl *Hanorah* had been rotting quietly in Mill Cove, Schull Harbour, until the summer of 1999, 106 years after she was built, when Nigel Towse of Sherkin Island and Liam Hegarty of Oldcourt boatyard raised her from the mud. As the painstaking restoration was carried out, interest in the yawls caught fire. Others bought boats to restore. The new story of the Towelsail yawls came to equal in fame that of the Galway hooker and it found a gifted narrator in Cormac Levis, a teacher at Schull College whose family had always been connected to the sea and hailed from Ballydehob just down the road.

Soon there was a fleet again in Roaringwater Bay. The fact that one sank on its maiden voyage after capsizing when over-pressed showed that lessons in seamanship had to be re-learned, as well as in boat building. (It was raised on the next tide.) Restoring or building traditional boats is never going to be cheap, far too much intensive labour and expert knowledge is required, but the Towelsail yawls have proved to be within the financial capability of a lot of ordinary enthusiastic, contemporary sailors and no doubt many more people will benefit from the events and regattas which once more grace Schull Harbour, Baltimore, and other venues in Roaringwater Bay.

In the UK we share the same interest in preserving old craft but it exasperates me to see this interest being exploited at times and benefiting corporate interests more than the ordinary sailor. Refitting Chichester's *Gipsy Moth IV*, which was a pig to sail according to his own opinion, was a recent venture. It cost half a million. We were invited to subscribe to the refit in one way or another and to enjoy vicariously her subsequent voyaging with a select crew. There are too many professional PR people involved in these projects for my liking.

There are few seafaring initiatives carried out in the vernacular tradition which make news. Enthusiasts do work quietly around our coasts, like the Liverpoolian restorers of *Nobbies*, but they get little publicity.

To me the lasting impression of the Towelsail yawls is that they were beautiful and built for next to nothing. Many other boats of the time had sweet sheerlines, or similar raked wineglass transoms, or curved fore-foots which swept up into not-quite-vertical stems, but rarely were the components of this

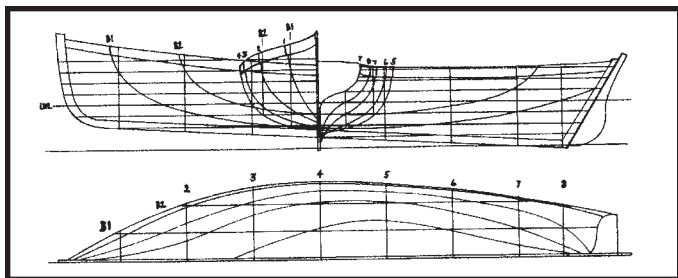
kind of boat reduced to such an absolute minimum. The drawing shows how the frames were set right into the keelson and how they were notched to take the leveling strake, so vital in maintaining the shape and integrity of the boat, and how structural strength was assured by fixing the sheerstrake over the levelling strake and the first carvel plank. This kind of hull cannot be made more simply.

The austerity of the build was matched by the thrift of the crews but the beautiful lines were never compromised, they were often refined and improved. There is a poignancy about this. It says more about people than it does about boats.

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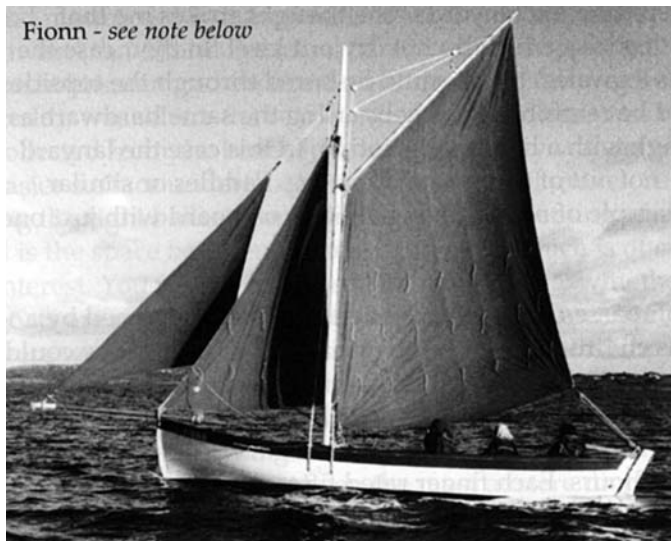


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Hanorah drawn by Ted Driscoll.

Fionn, photographed by Kevin O'Farrell, became the first lobster-boat to cross Roaringwater Bay under sail in 50 years when this picture was taken in January 2001. She was built to *Hanorah's* lines at Hegarty's Boatyard, Olticourt. The seminal work on the Cork lobster-boats is, *Towelsail Yawls, the Lobsterboats of Heir Island and Roaring-water Bay*, by Cormac Levis, Galley Head Press County Cork. ISBN 0 9542159 0 7, from which I have taken the photographs and *Hanorah's* lines. See also *Classic Boat*, September 2003, "The Lost Boats of Baltimore."



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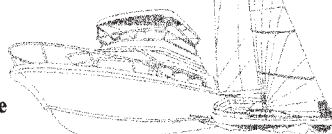
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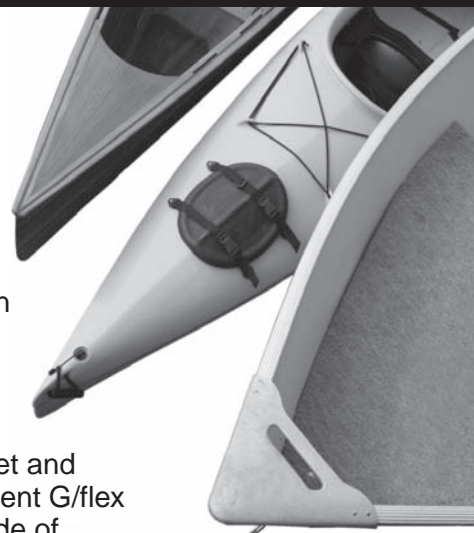
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I have used the term "Deep Six" in some of my articles in the past. I now realize that some among you may not be familiar with that nautical saying and others may not know its origins. When a sailor talks about "deep sixing" anything it means that it is going over the side and hopefully will disappear into deep water.

To understand where the term originated one must understand the use of the lead line. The lead line was, and still is, used to determine the depth of the water below the ship. A lead line is a length of rope with a lead weight on one end and markers tied on at some of the fathom marks. These markers were made of differing types of fabric so they could be identified by color in daylight or by the feel in the dark. Not all fathoms had a marker. Some were referred to as deeps.

When the leadsman was calling out the depths that he was reading he would call out "by the mark two" or "and a half three" or "by the deep six." "By the deep six" was the depth the old-time sailor could begin to relax, they now had enough water below the keel. Anywhere beyond this point one could deep six things. On the rivers in this country the river men could relax with 12' of water or two fathoms, thus the term "Mark Twain."

So what got deep sixed? Almost anything to be gotten rid of went over the side before 1965. Since then we have too many environmentalists looking over our shoulder. I have a few horror stories that I am going to share. I am not proud of what we did but that is the way things were then.

In the summer of '57 I was serving on the Coast Guard Cutter *Agassiz*. This ship was a 125-footer and it got beat up pretty badly in the North Atlantic. On one rescue that we did we flooded our forward compartment, the peak tank. After we had our tow underway the ship settled down with a following sea. The skipper called the deck crew forward and we opened the hatch to the forward compartment. The peak tank housed the chain locker and our paint supply and a few gallons of gasoline. This was a small space that the skipper estimated to be about 1800 gallons volume.

When we cracked the dogs on the hatch the smell of gasoline was overwhelming. When the hatch was opened we realized that the compartment was full of sea water up nearly to the deck. There was a lot of junk floating around in the water sloshing around. We had to pump out this space as the ship was pretty far down in the bow. We brought the one pump that we had forward and began pumping this mess over the side. When all the paints that a Coast Guard cutter carries on board are mixed one gets olive drab. I don't care what the proportions are, one gets olive drab.

When we began pumping we were pumping an OD stream over the side into the pretty Atlantic. We had a lobster boat in tow behind us swimming in this OD stream. As we pumped it became obvious that we needed someone in the hold to keep clearing the screen on the end of the hose. One man at a time would go down into the hold and remove paint cans and splinters of shelving from the screen on the end of the hose and throw this junk up on deck.

The skipper sat with a watch in hand and made a crew change every two minutes. He didn't want any of his crew overpowered by the fumes. Can you guess where all this junk went? We had little choice on that incident, we had to lighten the bow.



In My Shop By the Deep Six

By Mississippi Bob

A couple of summers later I was involved in an incident that could have been avoided. On board the Coast Guard cutter *Storis* I got my orders one fine summer day to take my big buddy Peterson forward and roll over all the paint cans. We were eastbound ten miles offshore from the Aleutians. We were given a manufacturers' date to look for, any cans that had an older date we were to open and pour out the contents into a large container before we deep sixed them. About four times a year we would do this rolling over any of unopened paint cans. This kept the paint from settling too badly.

Pete and I spent hours up in the foc'sle opening old paint cans and pouring them into a 30gal garbage can. When we had the can half full we would carry it back to the well deck and pour it over the lee rail. When we returned to Kodiak we had an OD patch about halfway down the port side that needed to be painted over. We also had a dirty North Pacific.

My next duty station was Keokuk, Iowa. I was stationed on a buoy tender there. Our dock space was on the upper side of the dam between the lock and the powerhouse. Another day of cleaning out old paint. This all went into the Mississippi River. Nothing would have been said except the lock tenders filled the lock just about the time we had a bunch of paint floating around us in the river. When the lock was drained the walls of the nearly new lock were painted OD. We had one very mad lockmaster on our hands.

A couple of years later there was another incident but now I was no longer in the Coast Guard, I was working for the Corps of Engineers as a lock man at Lock #1 on the upper Mississippi River. We were demolishing a small wooden shack on the upper end of our river wall. This building housed a lot of paint and some barrels of some unknown substance. You know by now where all that stuff went.

Lock #1 was a hydraulically operated lock. It was an antiquated system that had 16" cylinders that moved a gear rack that swung the gates and a pair of vertical cylinders that lifted the valves. This system had a storage tank for the hydraulic oil that held about 90 barrels of oil. We had to add a barrel every week during the navigation season to keep the reservoir full. We never saw an oil slick.

At this time in our history we were using laundry detergents that had lots of phosphates in them. One summer the phosphates got so bad that as the water warmed we would get a head of lather on top of the water 2'-3' deep when we filled the lock. I saw many very worried looking small boaters locking through and waiting for this scum to come in over the sides of their small boats. This foam would change colors from day to day depending on what else made it into the river. We accepted this as the way it was and thought no more of it.

About 1965 the environmentalists began preaching to us. They said that the river could be cleaned up. No way, I thought. We changed our policies and found out that the environmentalists were right. Times change. The river cleaned up a lot, within ten years things had really changed for the better. This cleaning process stops and reverses from time to time, it seems to match the political climate. I have joined the ranks of the environmentalists.

(Lead line talk: Once I heard the leadsman holler to the captain, "By the yellow rag." The captain called back, "There ain't any yellow rag." The leadsman responded, "There ain't no bottom either.")

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"So what sort of boat is this?" the lady at the sign-up table at the Mighty Merrimack River Rowing Race wanted to know.

Henry Szostek replied that it was a rowboat. "Yes, but what KIND?" she persisted.

"Well, I guess you could call it a peapod," Henry hazarded, and then continued, "yes, a Misery Island Peapod." That was all she needed to know. And so Henry's boat was now properly identified.

Henry Szostek lives in Beverly Farms, Massachusetts, he puts his boat into the ocean at nearby West Beach, and often rows out to and around Misery Island off the beach in Salem Sound. He also rows a lot further than that, way over to Halfway Rock off Marblehead and back, that's ten miles in the open sea. Because he liked to row in the ocean Henry decided to build this boat. It is his first boat. People who see it simply do not believe him, he has got to be kidding.

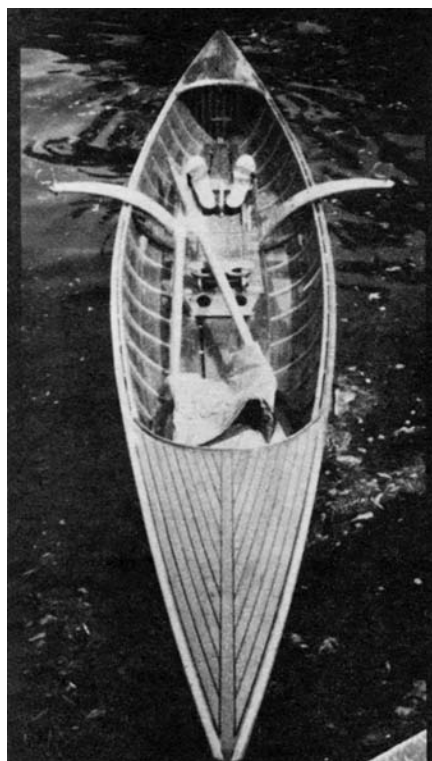
This ocean rowing boat is 21' long with a 3' beam. It is strip planked in white cedar and West epoxy. The ends are decked over with locust and teak with little compartment doors providing dry storage inside. The interior is bright finished and has a sliding seat set-up. Henry built that, too, from scratch. The oars rest in locks on outriggers laminated into graceful arches in ash. Henry made the oars and also the outriggers. Henry made everything. He made the hardware bits that make it all go together and come apart for cartopping handily. And he made the cartop rig that enables him to load the 185lb craft alone.

So no wonder this boat looks like a professional job, it has been built with great care and attention to detail. How come this man could do this with no prior boat building experience? "Well, I built model airplanes for 20 years," Henry will tell you, "and this was just a very large scale project along similar lines."

Maybe so, but it also reflects great skills working with wood. Henry earns his living exercising skills with machine tools in his basement workshop, fabricating precision bits for area hi-tech firms. So he had no trouble at all making the hardware for the sliding seat setup. "The Martin Oarmaster is a semi-production set-up," Henry responds when asked why he didn't just buy a sliding seat arrangement, "and it seems the average oarsman must be around 5'8" to 5'10". I'm 6'9" and just don't fit in such a rig.

Henry grew up near the ocean and did a bit of rowing in his early teens in the local postmaster's peapod. That boat had drift-

25 Years Ago in MAIB



Henry
Szostek's
Rowboat

ed ashore in a storm and had Nova Scotia ID in it. The postmaster found it and eventually located its owner in Nova Scotia. "Well, I'm not coming way down there to get it, you just keep it," was the former owner's reaction. This was in the '50s. Henry always remembered how nicely that boat rowed compared to the ordinary skiff.

In the early '70s Henry bought a fiberglass peapod and began rowing a lot more locally for exercise and recreation. Then he discovered sliding seats. And he thought about those muscular long legs just doing nothing for him in his peapod. Off he went to the Head of the Charles race to look over sliding seat rigs.

Henry is one of those people who is afflicted with that "I can do that and not have to pay THAT much for it" attitude. The price for sliding seat rowing craft was way more than he felt he could afford. He was appalled. So he decided to build his own.

He read the books, he looked over the catalog sheets. He viewed boats at meets and boat shows. He decided to not only build his own but to design it as well. He started making half models until he got one that looked like he thought he'd like. The length was to be 17' for he was going to build it in the at-

tic of his family's three-story house. But he got sidetracked building a two car garage with workshop and upstairs and when he was done it had a bigger attic. He spaced out the molds developed from his half model lines and came up with 21', the length of the new attic over the garage/shop.

Henry finished the boat up in the summer of '81 with its transport dolly and roof carrier equipment. He'd learned with the peapod that having to depend on help moving the boat seriously curtailed his opportunities for rowing. He brought it to the local TSCA meet in Salem and it was an immediate hit. "I enjoy just standing by and listening to the people discuss it," he smiles. Towering over everyone, smoking his pipe, the creator of such elegance.

People who talked to him about it found themselves invited to try it out. Some were really shook up when gravelly shoes crunched into the varnished interior. When Henry explained that one beached the boat by giving a last hard pull on the 9' oars to drive her well up on the beach, others shuddered. It was too lovely to use so hard.

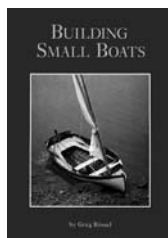
"I built this boat for hard use," Henry explains. "She's built of 3/8" cedar, epoxy sealed. She has that outside keelson." Henry isn't one to just look at his creation. He doesn't abuse it, after two years the boat still has its original paint and varnish, a few patches and dings in the finish are appearing, but it's been rowed a lot and by different people.

The weight of 185 pounds makes it uncompetitive with ultra light flatwater sliding seat craft such as the Fastarts. They beat Henry in flatwater races. "But when we go into the ocean, then I get the edge," Henry chuckles. He's won the Row Around Hull over the ultra lights when they hit the current and tide rips in Hull Gut, this seaworthy craft cuts on through while the lighter boats have to watch the waves more carefully.

Henry hasn't stopped development of his Misery Island Peapod. This coming winter he's making up 10' oars with an improved blade shape learned from talking with Arthur Martin. He's extending the outriggers, also. With his size and reach he feels he can use the longer sweeps to advantage.

And the next boat is taking shape in his mind. Same molds with a bit less depth (this one is 14" deep midship), cold molded instead of strip planked, less brightwork, more paint. No floorboards, lighter decking, a lighter sliding seat setup. Henry's decided now he wants the lighter boat for those occasions when all the ruggedness isn't needed and actually hinders his racing efforts.

He's in no hurry, he has ordered Port Orford cedar from Oregon after extended telephone negotiating. Part of the pleasure is in making this elegance take shape. It'll be 1985 before the ultra lite version of the Misery Island Peapod will make an appearance. "One thing I did learn building this boat was that those guys who build these for a living and charge those prices I was so appalled by earn their money." Since it was a labor of love for Henry Szostek the hours didn't have to be measured in dollars. It'll be the same with the new version, and while he spends the next couple of years meticulously putting it together, he'll still be out rowing those ten miles in the ocean and at the proliferating number of rowing races now being organized. Maybe she's heavy but she's still a pleasure to look at and a pleasure to use. And when the race is on an ocean course...



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Cartopping 21feet & 185pounds of boat.

Report & Photos
by Bob Hicks



Henry Szostek learned right off that keeping a rowing craft at home and trying to use it frequently created big problems in logistics. Weary of waiting for his brother's assistance, not to mention the imposition his need was on his brother, Henry developed his rooftop rig for carrying his 14' peapod. When he completed his Misery Island Peapod he built a larger version. Now he can single handedly transport the 185lb boat to wherever he can gain access to water over any sort of reasonably open terrain.

The boat rests in a tubular cradle so designed that it is slightly bow heavy. It rolls on two bicycle wheels. It can be easily rolled over all but the rockiest water access.

The cartop rig is a T-shaped assembly, the flat crossbar rests across the roof of his Renault and straps down to the rain gutters. The main pole points back over the rear and is supported on the rear bumper with two struts

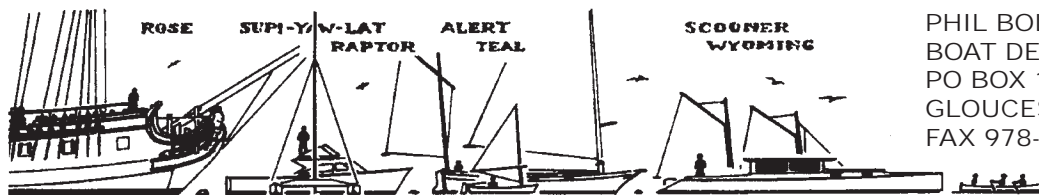
that snap into place in air hose couplings. On the end of this pole is a universal swivel joint Henry built.

To load, Henry wheels the boat alongside the car at an angle, bow facing the rear of the car, stern out around 10 o'clock in relation to the car's fore/aft axis. He lifts the bow lightly up and snaps the dolly bow fitting into the universal joint. Then he goes to the stern, lifts it clear of the ground, pivots the boat on its axis 180 degrees to inverted position. He then walks over to the car and lifts the stern up and over the hood until the gunwales are over the crossbar on the roof and then drops it into place. It is then strapped to the crossbar.

The entire sliding seat rig and the demounted outriggers and the oars are all secured within the boat beforehand in their appointed places so the entire boat equipt is all in one piece for transport.

Friends who have admired the simplicity and efficiency of this rig have urged Henry to go into business building this roof top carrier for sale. Henry smiles at the thought, "I'd be very concerned about someone 5'8" tall trying to get a 185lb boat onto a car roof overdoing it and filing one of those product liability suits." He usually is quite happy to show an interested onlooker how it all works, though, if you happen to run into him at a rowing race.

Editor Comments: Henry Szostek is still rowing regularly on his local waters and entering occasional rowing races in his current home-designed and built sliding seat outfit, *Rufus T. Firefly*. His Misery Island peapod and one of its successors, *The Unforgiving Minute*, have been passed on to new owners while *Yantu* is being converted into a double for a friend.



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Walt and I took a walk in Tokyo one day last spring looking for boats, he to take pictures and I to make notes and talk, especially talk. I discussed with him what I am about to relate and he seemed to think it interesting. I hope it is.

An officer of our unit gave us a lift as far as the palace and we walked down past the Seventh Cavalry area to the harbor. We found whalers and fishermen, lighters and barges, naval craft and a couple of big square riggers. We became very hot while walking since it was a warm day in April and winter uniform still prescribed.

The boats that took my fancy were a type of light power craft running 20' to 40' overall which, for want of a better name, I call Tokyo Bay fishing skiffs. They varied somewhat in proportions, some being long and narrow, others more bulky, though nearly all were slim by current American standards.

There were many to be seen. The bay crawls with them and we saw them in all stages of construction and dilapidation. They go up little creeks and under wharves to die, like old boats everywhere, and the little boatyards have the same contrasts of clean, smooth, new boats and weathered old ones.

Construction begins with the arrival of a rough log at the shipyard. By rough I mean the trunk of a tree with branches and some bark removed. Out of this timber the planks, sometimes 30' long by 15" wide, are cut with

Bolger on Design

Bolger's First Published Article

Seeing my name in print for the first time just about 60 years ago was a never-forgotten thrill. Here it is reproduced from what seems to be my only copy of the piece, somewhat shopworn and ill-kept with my typical indifference to preservation of matters old.

Tokyo Bay Fishing Skiff

By Philip C. Bolger
Photo by Walter J. Czajka
From Rudder Magazine, March 1948

a 2' one man hand saw with a straight grip like a chisel's but long enough for two hands. This looks like a terrible task, and is, but the usual Japanese boat builder has no power tools and sweats accordingly.

Setting up, they lay down the flat part of the bottom first, in lieu of keel, using the widest planks they can get. They seldom use more than three or four to cover the bot-

tom, even on the larger boats. Sometimes the planks are more than a foot wide. There is very little framing, wide heavy planks apparently being considered stiff enough. All the timbers are very heavy but an amazing number of what we call essential members, chine logs for instance, just aren't there at all.

Fastenings are plain black iron boat nails, ungalvanized, with a peculiar L-shaped head. On the better boats they are deeply countersunk and covered with a copper tab fitted into a neatly chiseled setting. I can't believe that this protects the nail much. I should expect a galvanic happy hunting ground. Some of the less careful builders skip it, leaving the nail on the surface, completely exposed. As you might expect, with the warping and cracking of the wide planks and rusting and corroding of the fastenings, the skiffs have a very short useful life. They are never painted, although some have the bottom tarred, so they are apt to soak up a lot of water and to foul badly. So much for construction.

Tokyo Bay is all mud flats with salt creeks and canals around its northern end, and the smaller inlets in fishing localities are so jammed with boats that you cannot see the water from bank to bank. It did occur to me that it is lucky they are so narrow as otherwise half the fishermen would have no moorings.

The accompanying lines represent a fairly typical boat with perhaps a little more beam and freeboard than most. The odd entrance, a sort of pointed box added to the forefoot, makes them quite sharp forward without twist in the planking. This is not universal. There are about as many more that have straight sections from chine to chine.

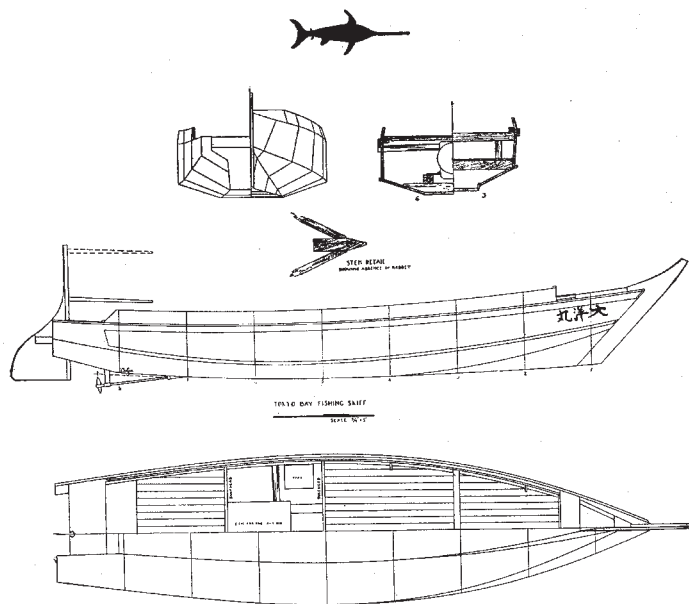
Working. Notice how easily she runs.



Tokyo Bay Fishing Skiff

By PHILIP C. BOLGER

Photo by Walter J. Czajka



On some of the coarser models the interior angle is 90 degrees.

The open stern, projecting 18" or so aft of the transom, is the most striking feature of the skiffs. It supports the rudder in a wobbly sort of way and protects the propeller when it is swung up. This last arrangement is quite tricky. The shaft pivots outside the hull and, with a gadget rather reminiscent of a back-stay lever, is pulled flush up against the hull. A small two-blade propeller is used and when this is turned to a horizontal position and the rudder is removed the boats can lie flat on their bellies in the mud or float in a few inches of water. All the fishermen carry poles for working through really shoal water.

You might not take this for a seaworthy type, but at Yokosuka, farther south, I have seen them fishing in the open sea. Considerable paraphernalia had been added to these, including short pulpits over the bow and assorted rails, shields, and bulwarks intended to keep the water out. They operated off an open beach, driving through the breakers with long sweeps, propellers retracted, and rudders in-board. Landings are executed stern first, slowly, cobble style. Of course, good seamanship counts for much but any boat performing that kind of service deserves some study.

As far as I know, this is the first description of these boats written. They represent something not so common in the United States, a really shoal power boat that performs well in a seaway. If a builder would revamp their shape a little and build them decently, he might come out with something.

But if he did, people would watch him building and say, "Chesapeake Bay model, huh?"

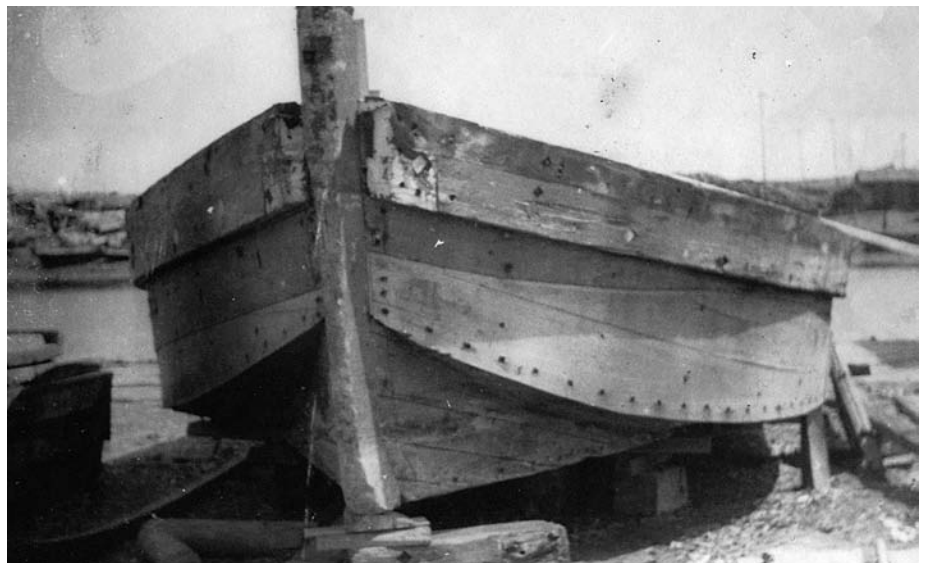
In 1947 I was serving with the 1st Cavalry Division in the occupation of Japan after World War II. Tokyo was just starting to recover from the fire bombing, still with miles of desolation where the wooden buildings had burned. Primitive methods were being used because everything, including power tools, was in short supply. As I learned later, the design and construction described date back hundreds of years, but the ancient design had been adapted to low-powered motorboats with little or no changes.

The remark in my text then that this was the first written description of these boats is, of course, nonsense, though it may have been true of the popular American yachting press. I learned the name "Yamato Boat" many years later from a UN paper about them. I designed several boats that had shapes not too different from the Japanese harbor lighter shown in the bow view photo which also had a similar box skeg at the stern. My Design #511, "Yamato-Boat" (7.6m x 1.84m, 25'x6'), was made decades later for a New Zealander. It's a more finished, buildable, version of the one sketched with the 1948 article. The modern Diesel engine specified is essentially a much improved Japanese development of the ones I saw in use just after the war.

The shape of these boats would come to have a lasting effect on my work to this day, especially the box forefoot blended into a flat bottom. The original object was to produce a good boat shape out of wide and thick planks that couldn't be twisted much. Seventeenth century shoguns (dictators) had enforced sustainable forestry on Japan just in time to maintain availability of good boat lumber. But the shape had obvious possibilities for sheet metal and plywood construction. I first used it in a steel work launch I designed



Small craft building without shelter or power tools.



when I was a draftsman in John Hacker's office, at my suggestion and his approval. Related variations of it have kept reappearing ever since.

Here are just two examples:

The "Fast Motorsailer" #601 has a sectional shape similar to the "Yamato Boat," the box forefoot blended into a narrow flat bottom with the outer bottom panels given sharp deadrise carried the full length. Under planing power this produces a reasonably softer ride along with nice banking in sharp high-speed turns, with one carrying 140hp clocked into the low 30s. Under sail she settles into an initial heel that matches that deadrise, offering good stability for an unballasted hull, not even water ballast!

The "Alaska Motorsailer" #610 is derivative indeed, except that I added a deeper box keel under her midsection to serve as a cargo hold for compact heavy items while serving as acceptably effective lateral plane area. Her overall length limiting plumb bow deviates from the rakish affair of the Yamatos, but in conjunction with her deeper mid-body fairs into a displacement speed afterbody by adding the box skeg of the Japanese lighter to contain a modest Japanese Diesel engine low in the hull under her wheelhouse.

Seeing these craft in '46/'47 would also come to eventually free some of my sharpie design thinking to utilize its lessons in otherwise unorthodox shapes quite far from the Yamatos. For a growing number of applications I moved away from the classical 6:1 length-to-beam proportions I had learned from Howard Chapelle by allowing a fine bow to be combined with a wide hull with a full curve in its forward sides.

Design #584 "Microtrawler" and #587 "Hawkeye" have bows similar to the lighter, with the rectangular forefoot grafted on to a wide flat-bottomed hull, here to be married well with the flat, high-speed stern.

Design #636 "Champlain" combines the sharp bow piece with a wide burdensome displacement-speed hull to do 6.5kts with 10hp.

Looking back at just these four designs of mine, these "innovative" concepts are highly derivative indeed! Beyond these, in the last decade or so, as most readers already know, using simple hull shapes, upgraded through additions of well-shaped appendices, mostly at the bow but when useful at the stern as well, have led to further advances on hulls slow and fast, power and sail.

The lesson is that studying historical types can be rewarding if it's accompanied by critical thinking about the minds of the long-gone designers. What were they trying to accomplish? What materials and tools did they have to work with? What winds, seas, and ports did they have in mind? Were they influenced by social matters such as measurement for taxation? Could some misapprehension about hydrodynamics or even some superstition have influenced their designs? Had some feature once logical been carried over into inappropriate uses and conditions? All often seen, to be sorted out from the gems of insight.

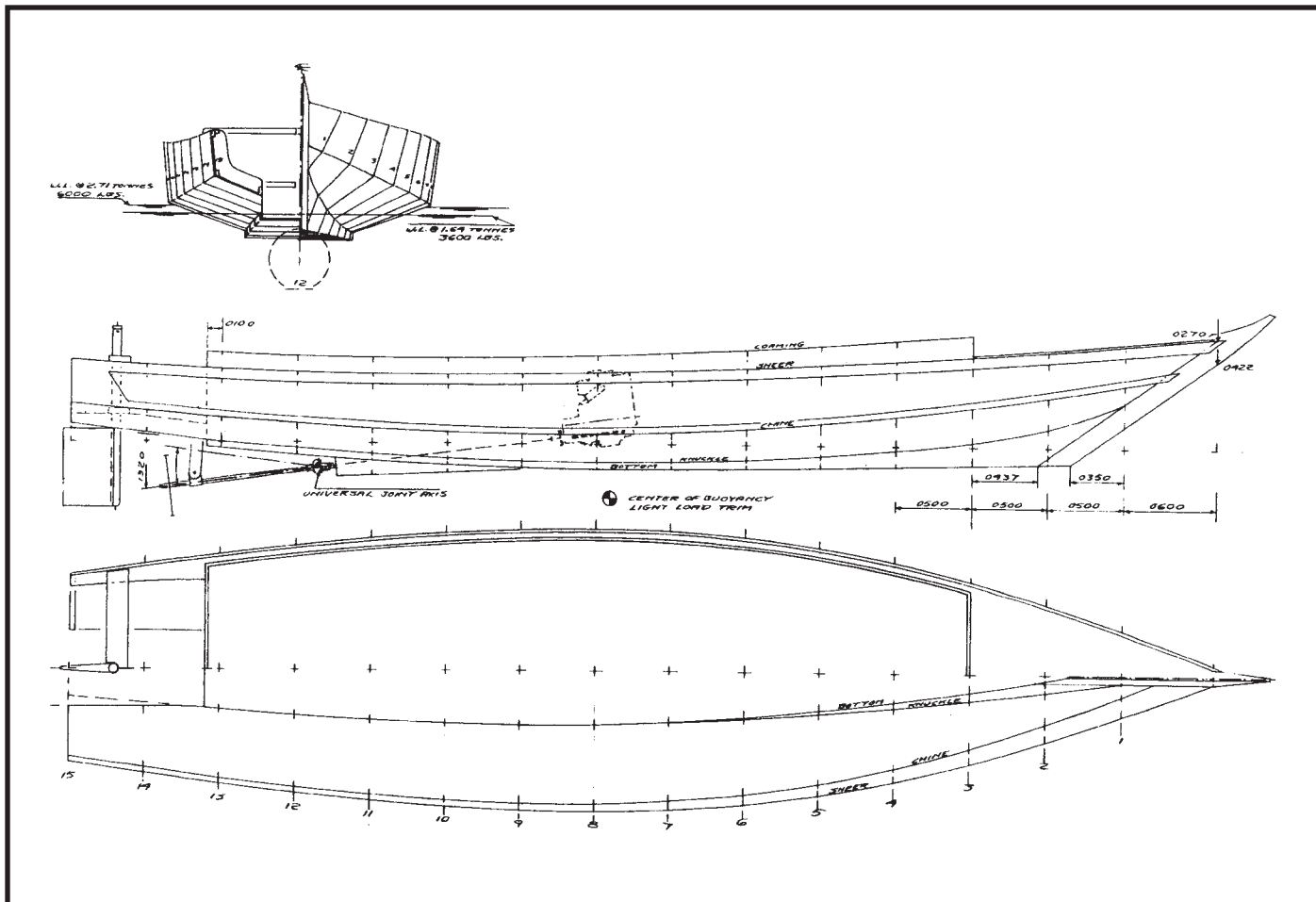
A short aside: the 1947 photo was taken from a bridge. Besides the Yamato boats, a parade of sailing lighters was passing under. They were working a tidal stream and a serving wind to deliver various cargos from one point on Tokyo Bay to another, less accessible to larger craft. As they approached the bridge they would lower sail, swing their

masts down enough to pass under, shoot through on momentum and the fair stream, and raise the rigs without losing steerage way. A glimpse of a standard procedure of the 19th century, revived for a short time to deal with a desperate situation.

Plans for Design #511 on just one 17"x22" sheet (no expansions) are available for \$100 to build one boat, post-paid rolled in a tube from us, Phil Bolger & Friends, PO Box 1209, Gloucester, MA 01930.



Alaska Motorsailer, #610, built by Scott Leiser. Her box cutwater with box keel and skeg allows her to sail in less than 3' of water.





Champlain, #636, built by the late Larry Sedgewick, showing the action of the box cutwater on an 8' beam, 22' long hull weighing 5,000lbs with a 9.9hp motor.



Fast Motorsailer, #601, the box cutwater allows a full planning hull with good high speed handling to sail quite well. Photo courtesy of Mr Marquardt of Germany, who built her.



Microtrawler, #584, planing on her box cutwater; 20 odd knots with 50hp on 14½' x 8' hull that has fine entry lines, built by Montgomery Boat Yard, in Gloucester, Massachusetts.



Hawkeye, #587, under construction at Montgomery's Boat Yard in Gloucester, Massachusetts, showing the underwater shape of the box cutwater.

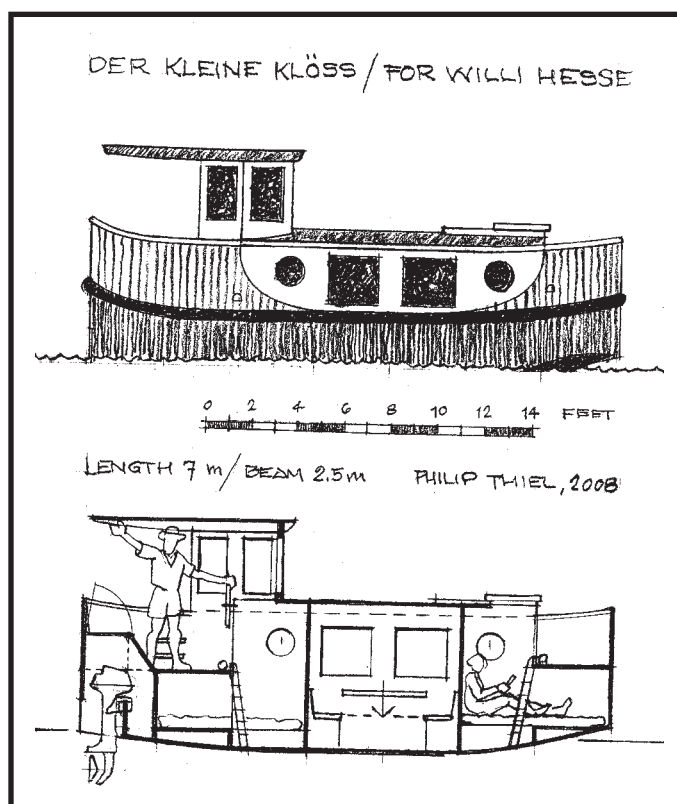
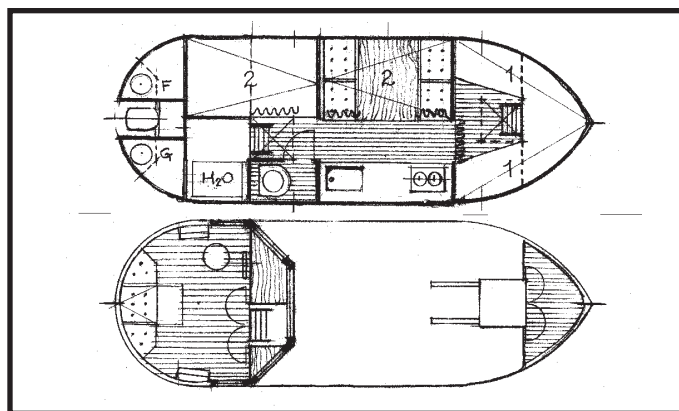
The Little Dumpling

By Philip Thiel NA

Willi Hesse has a boatyard in Germany, in Mullheim-an-der-Ruhr and also operates a fleet of "green" pedal-powered Escargots for cruising on the post-war recreational canals of this formerly heavy industry area.

There is now an interest in larger boats for longer trips so he wrote to me recently for my ideas for a craft "about 7m x 2½m (22'9" x 8'0") with six berths in three cabins, standing headroom, 5hp outboard in well, round stern, steering in doghouse, tugboat or puffer style and suitable for stitch-and-glue plywood/epoxy construction."

Herewith is my response sketch, a "Kleine Kloss" or "Little Dumpling." I wonder how it would do on the Erie Canal?



In a departure from more complex projects like my lapstrake Norwegian pram, Dulcibella, I decided to design an easy-to-build, easy-to-transport, multi-purpose utility boat for uncomplicated cruising on the many beautiful waterways near my home in Oregon. The result was the Jon Buoy, my adaptation of an extremely popular type called a jonboat. You can see jonboats in use almost everywhere, and for good reason. They have proven over a very long time to be exceptionally handy boats for fishing, water fowling, exploring, and general protected water cruising.

The flat bottom hull allows them to operate in extremely shallow waters, and when it's time to go ashore for camping or exploring, Jon Buoy is built light and tough enough to be easily beached and carried to higher ground. The flat bottom also makes for an easy planing hull, and with a 10hp outboard motor and modest load, Jon Buoy will move out smartly. Weighing only about 110 pounds Jon Buoy can be cartopped or rides nicely in the back of a pick-up truck for quick launching, and at 11'6" x 4'1" it has enough capacity for up to three persons to stretch out comfortably and enjoy a day on the water.

Jon Buoy is developed and drawn with the amateur builder in mind and provides a good introduction to "traditional" plywood construction. That is, it is set up and assembled on a simple ladder frame jig and incorporates transverse frames and longitudinal structural members, a system that has proven over many years to result in boats of superior strength and durability. Though some of

Jon Buoy

By Warren Jordan

the "high tech" jigless building systems can produce boats faster, I avoid them because I don't like dealing with all the toxic products and I don't like the kind of joinery that is encouraged by that style of boat building.

Besides, when no building jig is used it's hard to keep the various hull parts in perfect alignment, the result often being a boat with humps and twists where there should be only fair, seakindly lines. And, anchoring the hull to a stout building frame allows all the rough handling required in assembling and fairing the boat to be done without the chance of something going adrift.

Jon Buoy requires only three sheets of 1/4" or 6mm marine plywood and common lumberyard materials. The plywood can be purchased as pre-scarfed panels or you can save money by making your own panels using one of the two simple splicing methods described in the plans.

For Jon Buoy I specify a number of unique structural components and other features that I like to incorporate in many of my small open boats:

The seat frames are assembled with plywood web/gussets below seat level that serve to enclose and protect enough foam flotation to float the boat, motor, and crew in case of mishap.

Inwales attached to the inside of the frame heads act as a "bridge" structure which adds stiffness in the sheer area. They also make convenient handles for carrying the boat and for tying off bumpers and other gear.

The longitudinal bottom battens that add to the stiffness of the hull are located on the outside of the bottom where they double as rub strips, leaving the inside clean and uncluttered.

I specify inside chine logs for Jon Buoy because outside chines not only look clunky, but are vulnerable to damage. Much of the tedious labor of fitting inside chine logs is eliminated by extending them through both transoms, then cutting them off flush with the transom faces. Those areas of the transom are then capped with battens that also serve to protect the edge grain of the plywood.

To protect the chine area, which is the most damage-prone part of this type of boat, Jon Buoy has oak guard strips that cover the edge grain of the bottom plywood and eliminate the need to fiberglass that area.

The plans for Jon Buoy include detailed large scale drawings for all assemblies as well as a comprehensive booklet of construction notes that describe all components and building procedures, and is number keyed to the corresponding parts and assemblies in the drawings. No lofting is required. Also included are plans for building your own oars.

If you are interested in the plans for Jon Buoy or would like information on my other designs and products, please take a look at my website www.jordanwoodboats.com

Jon Buoy, beached for going ashore at Beaver Creek.



My son Peter, nephew Don, and his daughter Jordan exploring Beaver Creek near my home in South Beach, Oregon



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We were looking at a partly completed sea wall with a dense fog for company when some kayakers came paddling up the canal. "How was the trip?" we called out. "It was fine except for the visibility," they replied. "Welcome to St. Marks," I called back in return. Everyone had a laugh as they knew they were at Shell Point and not lost out in the fog. Later one of those involved noted that they had considered going around Live Oak Island after going under the bridge but decided that if they got out of sight of the island, while staying in water deep enough to float their kayaks, they might get lost. The idea of sticking a paddle down every few strokes to check that they were still in shallow water was not their idea of navigation. Of course, while they were wearing PFDs they did not have a hand-held compass on board.

Fog and/or heavy mist is one of the standard boating conditions this time of year in our area of the Gulf of Mexico. I have seen a fog bank come rolling in with the sun shining on the rest of the bay. My wife and I went out to start a sailboat race one day in bright sunshine. We started the race in a fog and were in sunshine again before we had gone more than a few hundred yards from where the boat had been anchored to start the race when heading back to the dock (on a compass course for the entrance to Shell Point).

Without a compass, wind and current can affect a boat's course over ground (COG) and there are few ways of noting any discrepancy. With a compass the boat is still subject to wind and current but the bow can at least be pointed in the proper direction. In our part of Apalachee Bay we can go north or east and be sure to reach land (where exactly is another question). A depth sounder is also useful to keep from going aground and to provide another navigational tool in terms of a fathom curve to follow.

One of the advantages of our area is that the variation for the magnetic compass is almost zero. Deviation is another matter alto-

From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

gether (remember the boating advertisement years ago with the steel beer can next to the compass?) and is relative to your boat. One of my boats had a large change in the compass bearing when the engine ran. Under sail it showed one direction, under power another. Hence, I had two deviation tables for the compass since creating the two tables was less work than trying to fix the electrical/magnetic interference caused by the operating engine.

Deviation is not only relative to a boat and its equipment, deviation is also affected by the direction the boat is pointing relative to magnetic north. A sun compass can be used to calculate a deviation table for a boat's compass. Or, one can motor/sail on a known course (between two fixed navigational aids, for example) and see how far off the compass reading is from the actual course. Using several navigational aids, a deviation table can be created for a boat for various magnetic headings. The deviation for a boat may be known on a given heading but would someone else know if they were operating the boat? A posted deviation table is a good idea for self preservation.

Bilge pumps are another boat tool that should be considered in terms of actual use. Not only the question of "Does it work?" but also the question of how much water does it actually pump over the side. Back in November 2007 the expeditionary vessel *M/S Explorer* suffered a hole in the hull and, for reasons under investigation, sank in the Antarctic. It was noted that the pumps could not keep up with the estimated 1,250 gallons-per-minute inflow.

In July 1999 *Seaworthy* published a table on page 10 showing the estimated amount of inflow from various sized holes

at various depths below the waterline (a 6" hole lets in 1,226gpm at 3' below the waterline). The question for us is whether or not our boat's bilge pump could keep up with even a small leak, let alone a major hole. Most information on the subject notes that what is given by the manufacturer as the pump's capability is offset by length of hose, type of hose, distance to the outlet, and other factors. Thus, in some of the discussion of bilge pumps writers recommend that you put a gallon jug at the outlet outside the boat and see how much water your boat's pump actually moves in a minute.

Even a good bilge pump with an automatic float switch does not do much good if the boat is not routinely monitored. We have had two boats "sink" in the Shell Point area in the last month from the tide coming in and the boat not floating because the rising tide water flowed into the boat before the displacement raised the boat. In one case, the bottom had a steep slope and the stern of the boat (with outboard attached) was lower than the bow. The tide came in, the water filled the stern over the transom, and the boat stayed on the bottom.

In another case, a sailboat went aground and those on board put out an anchor for the night and left the boat. The tide went out, the keel boat laid over on its side, the tide came back in filling the cockpit and then the cabin. Last I saw the small boat was still up against the seawall near the launch ramp in the Shell Point Basin a few weeks after it filled with water. The sailboat was salvaged the next day. But it will take some time and money before the boat is ready to be used again.

A few years back we had a medium-sized power boat "sink" off Shell Point when it went aground and the incoming tide flooded the cockpit through the stern scuppers. If someone had plugged the scuppers the stern would have floated up with the incoming tide instead of staying down and allowing the tide to flow into the boat.

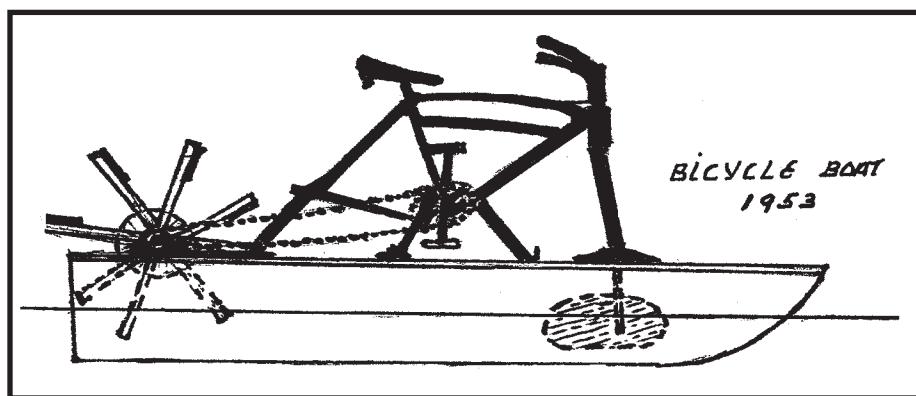
Still Using Plywood

By Jerry Mathieu

The first boat that I built was made from 1/4" plywood. That was in 1953 and I was 12 years old at the time. I was working in my Uncle Ovide's 12'x30' shop repairing bicycles in order to make some extra cash. That extra few dollars a week helped a lot because our chicken farm was near a great ice cream parlor and this was a nice place to hang out at age 12.

One day, while riding my bike to the local bleachery pond to fish and swim, I got to thinking a boat would be nice thing to have. So I put a bike and boat together. I think that *Popular Mechanics* played a big part in this whole business, but I can't find any reference to building plans for this bicycle boat anywhere. One sheet of 1/4" marine plywood at about \$7 was all that I could afford and this regulated the size of my craft. It had two pontoons 12"x7'9", 1/4" ply for the top and bottom and 1"x8"x8" pine sides. The two pontoons were spaced about 24" apart.

It had a bicycle frame sitting on angle iron cross pieces lagged to the pontoons (nothing light here). The chain drive drove a paddle wheel between the pontoons aft. The front fork had the rudder attached to it. Soon



I would find out that this was not the best place to put a tiller. As my boat was nearing completion I realized that towing this contraption with my bike was not realistic. The first attempt to tow this rig, using my bike as a tow vehicle to pull it the 1 1/2 miles to the pond, did not go too well. After much prodding, whining, and promises to clean the chicken coops, my father and uncle helped get the boat to the bleachery pond, knowing full well that I would not clean the pens without a full scale war.

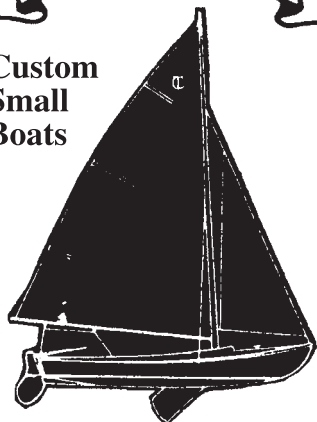
I survived the launch and sea trials, PFDs were not even given a thought, the elders said that if I got too far from shore

they would call me in! The boat didn't have enough displacement or was too heavy, maybe both? The paddle wheels tried to pull the boat under instead of forward. The rudder on the front fork only seemed to work backing up.

That's when I first realized that learning about building boats was going to be a long process but I never thought of quitting. Necessity and lack of funds have guided my projects along the way. Now I use epoxy (that was just invented in 1953) along with marine plywood to build skiffs, outboard motors are now used for power, and bicycles are no longer considered as a propulsion source!

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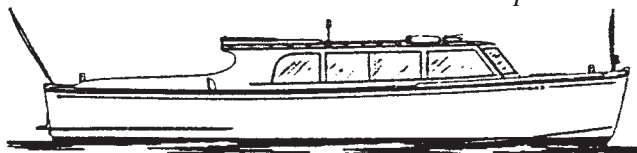
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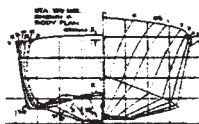
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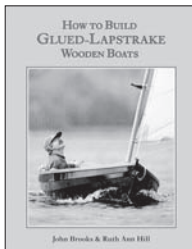
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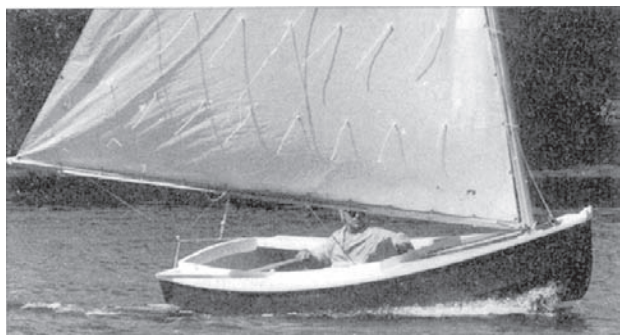
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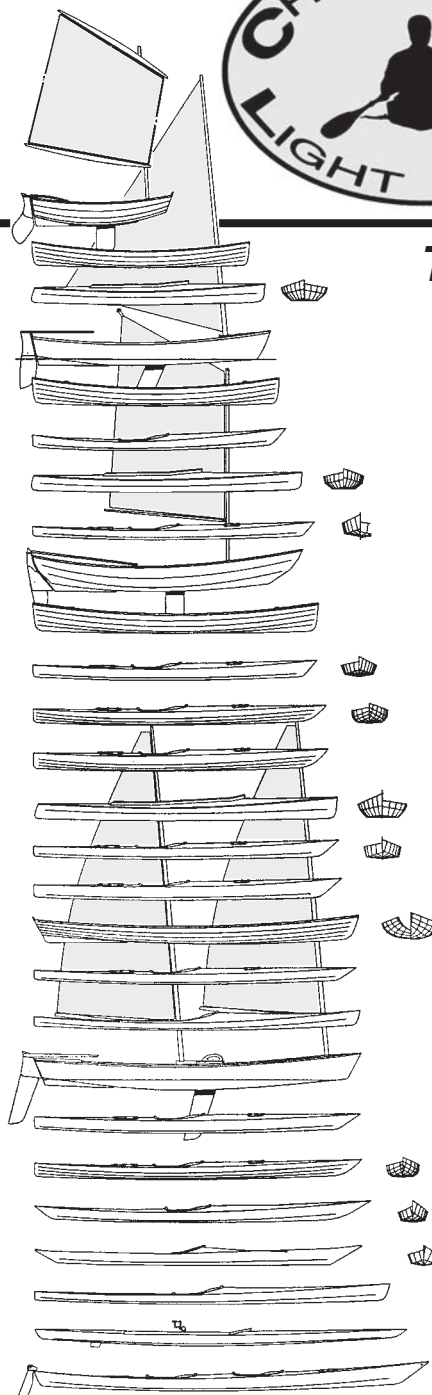
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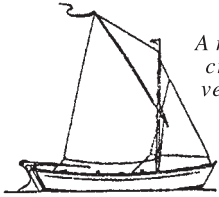
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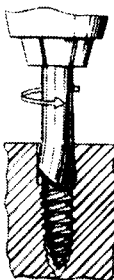
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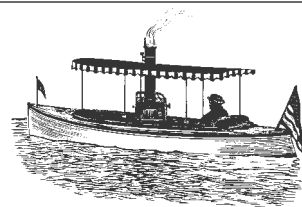


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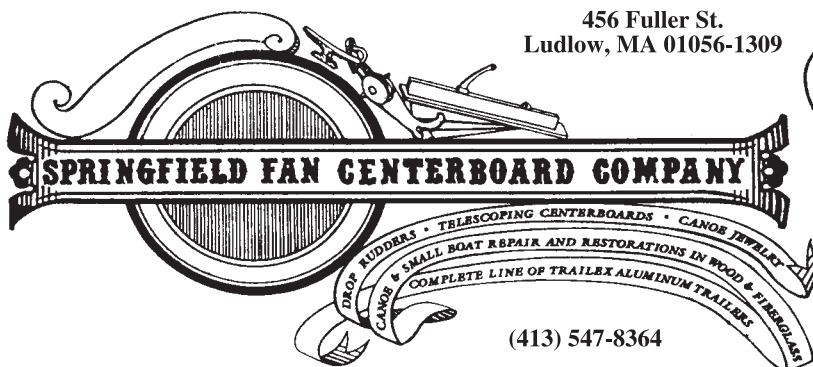
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Sears Runabout, #RR 11-1-145-57B, vy similar to the "Swift" shown on page 9 in January issue. W/like-new galv trlr. \$700. JACK FAATZ, Dayton, TN, (423) 775-2944 Mon-Fri (508)

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Most likely if you call the shop it'll be Randy who answers the phone. He talks people through the building of our kits, he negotiates with suppliers and when he reported to the salesman that something was wrong with the adhesive in the latest batch of 3M sandpaper.....his complaint rattled its way up the chain of command and 3M made a world-wide recall of that particular run of sandpaper. Seems to us that there was only one person in the whole world who was actually paying attention.

Early in his life Randy was a truck mechanic. Then he became an aviation mechanic and took a job maintaining helicopters flying over a tuna fleet near Guam. Aircraft maintenance is difficult enough in the best of circumstances.....doing it on a pitching boat in a



salty environment in the middle of the Pacific Ocean ... well, that's even harder. All Randy knew was that his job was to keep his birds and his pilots in the air....which he did.

How Randy came to have a passion for building small boats we don't quite know. He first met Steve at a boat show at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, came to the shop for a look-see and 10 years have passed since then.

Randy's passions include radio controlled aircraft, fine cigars, Cuban if you've got 'em, science fiction and working to 1/10,000th of an inch...to which Dave says, "Please, Randy, don't do that to us."

The photo at left was Randy teaching Joshua, David's son, how to weld. The smoked glass in Randy's welding helmet is genuine OSHA approved safety glass, the rest of the helmet is made of genuine OSHA approved cardboard.

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May 24-26 Woodstock Craftshow, New Paltz, NY ***

Jun 14-15 Cape Cod Life Boating Expo (tentative) Hyannis MA ***

Jun 21-22 Crafts at Rhinebeck, Rhinebeck, NY

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Jul 25-27 Finger Lakes Boat Show, Skaneateles, NY ***

Aug 1-3 Antique & Classic Boat Show, Clayton, NY ***

Aug 2-3 Champlain Valley Folk Festival, Kingsland Bay, VT ***

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